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IS IT FRIENDSHIP? IS IT LOVE?

An Episode of Long Branch.

"He says he loves my daughter.
I think so too; for never gazed the moon
Upon the water as he'll stand and read
As 'twere my daughter's eyes; and to be plain,
I think there is not half a kiss to choose
Who loves the other best."

SHAKESPEARE.

Like beds of oriental flowers,
Stirred softly by some wandering breeze;
Or white-winged barks, in halcyon hours,
Careering over summer seas:
Hither and thither gently tending,
Where'er the billow sinks or swells,
Now rising quick, now slowly bending,
As that capricious force compels.

So gathered on yon frescoed floor,
Like wind-kissed flowers, a brilliant throng,
Till Laurent's stirring strains are o'er,
In measured cadence glide along!
There is no shadow on the brow,
For this one night, at least, no care;
Yet many a heart is beating now,
And many a fruitless hope is there!

Those lovely strains have ceased to sound,
And gentle words their music lend;
And those fond courtesies abound
That mark the lover from the friend:
The deferential air, the voice,
Low, tender, sweet, that asks a boon
(Bidding the listener's heart rejoice)
That cannot be conferred too soon!

The flitting blush, the downcast eye,
That speaks before the lips respond;
The heaving heart's unbidden sigh,
All eloquence of speech beyond;
The lover's boon at once concede;
And syllable as soft as ay
As e'er was granted as the meed
Of service for a longer day!

And other fond, soft-whispered words,
Breathing of questions yet to be,
Fall gently on her bosom's chords,
And wake each thought to melody;
And, bending o'er her flowers, her eyes
Those earnest glances strive to shun;
Her heart's interpreters but sighs;
The only answer he hath won.

More to require might scarce beseem
A graduate in the school of Love,
Where the glance, blush and sigh we deem
Of signs all other signs above.
He needs no more; his fate is read;
All verbal tokens now are vain;
And, seeming the bright air to tread,
He leads her to the dance again.

A mother fond, with anxious love,
Racked by alternate hopes and fears,
Feeling that hour the source may prove
Of bliss or bale for future years;
Foreboding too her child may share
A fate as sad as hers had been,
And, wanting love's own prescience, there
Sits gazing sadly on the scene.

Asking her heart if this might be
Affection strong that lasts for life,
Or but that gentle courtesy
With which such festive halls are rife
Coming events those doubts belie.
Her daughter, fairly wooed and won,
Has realized that triple tie,
Friend, lover, husband, all in one!

A GOOD MATCH.

By CATHARINE FILER.

The season was drawing to a close, and already the earlier birds had departed; the tourist was beginning to crop up in strange localities, and the lodging-house keeper, sniffing the battle afar off, to prepare for battle with her natural enemies, the visitors, groups of whom I found scattered about the Eastern station as I comfortably ensconsed myself in the corner of a carriage bound for Staverton Towers.

A very few months back Clement Sandering, with whom I was going to stay, had been living in town on a comparatively small income, which he augmented in a somewhat desultory fashion, by literary work. He had written a novel, a successful comedy, an endless variety of subjects, and was looked on as rather a rising man. Probably he had never heard of Staverton Towers, when one morning, among the letters and papers which burdened his table, was a note from a firm of lawyers in the city, to tell him that the Towers, and rather extensive property in Meadshire, belonged to him.

Sandering had met with such things in the realms of fiction, and the intimation seemed rather like the foundation of a plot for a novel than a real and veritable possibility. It was true, however; a distant relative of the late owner had died childless in Paris, and within a short time Sandering resigned his chambers and left town.

In former days I had, during the season, vaguely hovered round a certain Gertrude Leigh, Sandering manifesting a slight disposition to admire her sister Belle. All this was entirely hopeless, as there was not the remotest chance of old Sir Thomas consenting, even if the girls had wished it; and Lady Leigh would probably have had fits if the subject had been even mentioned to her. The affair was not very serious on my part, nor, I think, on Sandering's, though some of his heroines bore a suspicious resemblance to the fair Belle; but then, what would you have? one must get his heroines somewhere, for pictures painted without models are seldom satisfactory. Circumstances alter cases, however, and this circumstance had very materially altered the case. Since his accession he had been in Paris where the Leighs were also staying, and though his letters had not said anything particularly pointed, it was evident that they were much together, and only natural to suspect that the usual something would come of it.

Immediately on his return he had written to invite me down; there was no one with him, he said, and if I had work to do, it would be much quieter than the Chambers; so taking a heap of paper to ease a conscience which demanded industry, but secretly resolving to do nothing but lie under the trees, I started, anxious to see Sandering before his bachelor days were ended; for marriage sometimes alters a man very considerably, and a young wife has not always the most enthusiastic affection for her husband's bachelor friends.

He met me at the station, and we drove to the Towers. The fine old house was in striking contrast to the dingy Chambers; as was the small army of men about the place, gardeners, grooms and the rest, to the dilapidated old woman and diminutive boy who attended him in times of yore; but he had fallen naturally into the new habits and interests, and it seemed years since the old London days.

After dinner we retired to a small room to discuss all that had happened since we last met.

"And how are things theatrical?" he asked, when he had given me details of his journeying.

"Much as they were when you left, I think; and as they will be always. The good pieces pay; the bad ones don't. Isn't the same principle carried out in everything? If managers produce good pieces, publishers good works, or publicans good beer, the people go, and read, and drink, remuneratively. All the same, I suppose, we are to understand the drama is declining."

"By the way, that young lady, who played *Mary* in your comedy," I said.

Sandering rose slowly from his chair, and leaned against the mantel-piece.

"Miss—what was her name?" I continued. "You seemed much struck with her once, and that was why she was taken from the ranks to play the part, I presume. Miss Burton—that's it. I suppose you have forgotten all about her now?"

"No," he slowly replied, with a somewhat troubled face; "I have thought a good deal of her—and a good deal less of myself in consequence."

I looked at him, inquiringly.

"I was struck with her, as you say, and told her so, and used to take her about to afternoon performances and that sort of thing; and gave her the part in the comedy, as you know."

"Which was quite as much to your advantage as to hers, for she acted it charmingly," I interrupted.

"She did, certainly. Well, I used to take her about and got to like her, awfully. After a time she seemed to grow shy—wouldn't come always when I wanted her to, and I was vexed and couldn't understand it. One evening, when she was out of an engagement, I wanted to take her to the opera, and she made an excuse, so I asked her about it. She said, 'Of course I'd like to go with you every day, dear, only you know how particular I have to be, and, if we are always together people will talk and wonder where——,' I think she was going to say, 'wonder where it will end;' so it occurred to me to wonder where it would, and knowing where it would, and knowing where it ought—for she was evidently fond of me—I told her I wanted to marry her."

He stopped and gazed thoughtfully into the fire.

"And what did she reply?" I asked.

"I took her to the opera that evening. Things went on for a couple of months—she was a dear, good little girl," he said, breaking off his sentence, and pausing as some memory appeared to flit before his mind, "and a lady, too. I don't mean that she could get through a wood of social etiquette, as Gertrude Leigh might, without knocking against some of the trees, but in heart she was as perfect a lady as the best of them. However," he continued, "things went on for a couple of months, and she was away from town when, I heard, to my intense amazement, that this place had come to me. Well, the Leighs were there, and so was Ethilton, and—and he knew about the affair—with the little girl, and——"

"And I suppose he indulged in that mysterious style of conversation vaguely termed 'saying things?'" I asked.

"Yes, he talked about my position in the county, and my small knowledge of the girl whose associations had been somewhat equivocal; and said what a good thing it would be if I went in for Belle Leigh—you know I used to like her, rather—and he persuaded me to stay on, and ——"

"Lord Ethilton is such a great swell that I can't be expected to see things from his elevated point of view; but I must say I fail utterly to understand why your position in the county should oblige you to act dishon——"

"Go on," Sandering said, as I stopped short, "oblige me to act dishonorably——"

"To act unkindly," I continued, "to Miss Burton."

"And you think I ought to go and see her? Perhaps she has forgotten all about me."

"I'm sure you ought to go; she's not the sort of a girl to have forgotten you—or to ever have forgotten herself, in spite of Lord Ethilton's charitable opinion."

[Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1875, by Walker, Reed & Co., Publishers and Proprietors, in the office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington.]

"I think there is not half a kiss to choose
Who loves the other best."—(See Poem.)

"I will go, I will go; and by Jove! I feel so happy now I've made up my mind. Of course I ought to go; and I'll start to-morrow morning; it seems rude to you, old fellow, when you're just come down."

"Not at all," I said, and meant it; though, for the matter of that, no other answer was possible. "I'll go up with you if you like."

"Don't you mind, really? I can't tell how much obliged I shall be. Do you know where she is?"

"Yes, I was at a rehearsal at the Prince's a day or two ago. She is going to play in the new *opera bouffe*."

"A part?" he asked.

"Two lines, I think, and about five bars of recitative. There were thirteen people in the boxes, and nearly two rows in the stalls the other night, and such business nearly turned Manly's head, and he put a new piece in rehearsal at once."

"There is a train at half-past nine, if that's not too early for you," he said, eager to be off, now that he had decided to go.

"Not at all; and as it's nearly twelve I think I'll retire. Good night! Whatever are you thanking me for? Good night! and good luck in this and everything!"

A servant brought a very early message next morning that Sandering was up and waiting for me to breakfast with him; and the dog-cart to take us to the station was at the door twenty minutes earlier than necessary.

We arrived at town about two o'clock, and hastened to the theatre, where rehearsal was busily proceeding. Sandering's heart slightly failed here, and I left him in the neighboring square while I went to find Nellie Burton, and tell her that he was waiting to see her. I made my way up the little dark staircase, and paused at the back of the half-lighted stage to take in the scene. The ladies of the establishment were seated in a semicircle, receiving, with some shrugging of the shoulders, the verdict of the leader of the band that there was very little improvement in the rendition of the chorus, and that it must go a good deal better before it would do. He was a vulgar person, for he ventured to say that some of the soprani were very flat and quite out of tune. Two of the men who played characters of the Orestes and Pylades kind, but who would have played Cain and Abel infinitely better, were quarreling bitterly with each other, in most polite tones, as to what business should or should not be introduced into the scenes they had together. One of the principal ladies was going through a speech, to which the author was listening with an ill-concealed expression of contemptuous dismay. He had written pieces before, and so sorrowfully resigned another of his best points and a good joke, fervently hoping that the next good thing he wrote would be cast for a lady who had, at any rate, some ideas of understanding sentences in her native tongue. The manager, with some of his company, were examining a brilliant poster, containing all the hues of the rainbow, in addition to several which no well-constructed rainbow ever dreamed of assuming, destined soon to blaze out and illuminate a thousand walls. But posters won't make pieces, and the prospects of succeeding treasuries grow more than precarious if a play has nothing but the boardings to prop it up.

I soon caught sight of Nellie Burton, whose fresh, honest little face formed a contrast to many of those around her—harsh, coarse, and false in expression. Her trim little jacket had been worn before, so had the jaunty hat perched on the top of her fair curls; but she was very pleasant to look at.

"Are you busy?" I asked, when she had given me a very nice little hand to shake.

"I have to sing all this, directly," smiling as she held out a sheet of music-paper with a few bars scribbled on the top.

"Are they going over that scene again? Not without cause, I think; Miss Shaftsbury don't seem to know much of her part, and she certainly can't sing the music," I said.

Kind little Nellie wanted to find an excuse for her directly.

"Well, you see, it is rather an awkward part to play," she urged.

"Then the author's intention will be thoroughly realized, for she's certain to play it awkwardly. I came here on purpose to find you, Miss Burton. A friend of mine, and of yours, wants very much to see you," I said, taking her a little apart. "Can you guess who it is?"

Her lips said "No," but her face very plainly said "Yes."

"It is Sandering."

"I can't imagine what Mr. Sandering can wish to see me for," she replied, with an attempt at haughtiness which did not much accord with the eager way she glanced around to see if he were near, as she asked:

"Where is he?"

"In the square, waiting very anxiously to see you."

"I am quite at a loss to understand what Mr. Sandering can have to say to me. Will you please ask him to write if there is really anything?"

"To a certain extent, Miss Burton, I am in Clement's confidence; and, if I were not, your tone would lead me to infer—several things."

"I am sure my tone is just the same as always," she said, looking up with a faint twinkle as of coming tears in her bright eyes. "Mr. Sandering is nothing to me, and I had much rather not see him."

"Of course, if you had rather not, there is nothing more to be said; but he will be greatly pained at your refusal—your unkind refusal, for he came all the way from Staverton on purpose to see you. I did not think that you would have condemned any one without hearing the defence. Circumstantial evidence is so terribly deceptive."

She did not know what to do, and so she tried to be angry, and rolled up her sheet of music without the slightest regard to the legibility of the writing.

"Well, good-bye, Miss Burton; I will say that you are too angry to forgive him, shall I?"

"There's nothing to forgive, and I'm not angry a bit," she said, quite as savagely as it was possible for her to speak.

"What is the word?" I answered, repressing a slight inclination to smile. "Annoyed, hurt, vexed, grieved, disappointed? There is evidently something wrong between you, for you were excellent friends when his play was produced. If you see him he will probably in three seconds explain away whatever requires explanation, and then you will be very sorry you hesitated in hearing him. I have very good reasons for believing that his explanation will be entirely satisfactory to you"—which I had not, but then, it strengthened my shot, and I knew when they once met a good deal might be left to Sandering's native wit and persuasive powers, if the girl had really ever been fond of him.

She unrolled her music, and studied the signature at the beginning of the stave with great diligence.

"My cue will be coming directly," she said, at length.

"And then you'll see poor Clement?"

"Indeed, I don't see why you call him 'poor Clement.'" But she lingered over the name, and seemed to like the sound of it; "he's not—Yes, I'll go, if you don't mind waiting a minute more," and she went down to the stage, did her scrap of duty, and then we left the theatre together.

Sandering was coming towards us as we turned into the square, and raised his hat as I left Miss Burton and retired, he seeming uncertain whether to offer his hand, for her obstinate little paws were tightly holding her parasol. I looked after them, however, when they had gone a little way, and saw one hand slowly relax its grip and resign itself for a moment to Sandering's custody, and when presently they overtook me, a glance convinced me that all was right. Nellie Burton appeared well on her way to making a good match.

The future Mrs. Sandering lived in rooms up a good many stairs in one of the streets which surrounded Russel Square, and thither I used sometimes to accompany my friend, when our pretty little hostess regaled us with cups of tea and sang songs to us at a tinkling little piano, which tried to be gay and festive and make good music, but whose age and decrepitude would sometimes assert itself by the sudden cessation of a note or so which had grown tired and refused to speak any more—very unlike the mistress, who was never tired of talking a great deal in these happy times. Here, too, we examined her drawings—she was a very clever little woman and sketched admirably—and looked over the precious volume in which were pasted the few newspaper cuttings criticising her performances, mostly from country chronicles, though there were nearly two lines from a London morning paper, which had afforded her so vast an amount of pleasure, that if the writer had but known the gratification it was destined to give, I believe he would have defied his editor and put in half a column.

In one of these afternoons, about a week after our arrival in town, we were looking over a portfolio of sketches, and Sandering was amusing himself by chaffing the drawings to tease Nellie.

"The only suggestion I have to offer," he said, putting a sketch on the mantel-piece, and looking at it with the burlesque air of a connoisseur, "is that a body should put titles and explanatory notes to her drawings, because a body is so apt to be misunderstood."

"I wish you wouldn't keep on teasing me about 'a body,' just because I used the expression once," spoiling a laugh with a pretended pout.

"You should be very careful [illegible] expressions you make use of [illegible] ant all you can muster to put into these works of art, dear. Now, here's a strong picture, very charming, very interesting, but just a trifle vague," selecting another from the case. "A gentleman seated in a—a box, carried by two elliptic wheels, and drawn by a—by an anomalous quadruped, which my slender knowledge of natural history will not safely permit me to—— A horse, is it? really a horse? Well, we'll call it a horse, at any rate, if only for the sake of, or rather the avoidance of argument. Drawn by a horse. The gentleman is engaged in emulating the example of Simple Simon in the ballad, and fishing as he goes along the turnpike road—— *Driving!* Do you seriously mean it? Very well, dear, you drew it, and so you ought to know; but why a man should go out driving with a fishing rod in his hand, I—— A *whip!* Oh, no, Nellie, dear, that is going a little too far; really, it is only as a personal favor to you that I can consent for a moment to accept that as a whip. Men don't hold their whips jutting over their horses' backs like bowsprits, and it quite bears out my premises that explanatory notes should be appended to these works of art."

Nellie showed a disposition to attempt the recovery of her much abused work, but Sandering was on the alert, and resumed:

"He is driving (if you really do insist upon it) up a hill, toward a church of ingeniously assorted architecture, about which I will only say that, if the incumbent is not more upright as a man than the steeple is as a building, the heads and morals of the congregation are in some danger. You are sure that is a horse?"

"What a shame!" cried Nellie, laughing. "I'm sure it's all quite plain enough."

"Quite *plain* enough, in all conscience—you might go almost so far as to call it *ugly*," Sandering replied.

"You may think so, if you like, sir. I'm sure the church is upright, and my uncle is incumbent—at least curate, there," Nellie said, looking at the drawing.

"Why, I never knew that you had an uncle, dear. What's his name, and where does he live?"

"He lives abroad, and I don't write to him much—he wouldn't like my being in the profession. He's very kind, though, and used to want me to go and live with him, only I didn't. Hedley, his name is."

"What Hedley—not Robert, I suppose?" Sandering asked.

"Yes; it is Robert. How did you guess?"

"You don't mean to say that this is Chesterton church?" in a tone of extreme surprise.

"Yes; it is," Nellie answered, evidently bewildered at his knowledge.

"But, surely, Nellie, Robert Hedley, who was curate of Chesterton church in 18—, was not your uncle?"

"Not only was, but is. Why are you so excited about it, dear?"

"Don't you know that—have you not heard of his death, Nellie?"

"No; indeed I haven't."

"Poor little girl! I ought not to have mentioned it so suddenly. He died on the seventeenth of November, 18—,"

Nellie laughed.

"Then, all I can say, is, that he has since been represented by a wonderfully healthy ghost. I have not seen him lately, but two or three times since then; and I shall most likely have a letter from him—or the ghost—to-morrow morning. I wrote the other day, the first letter for a long time, to tell him about—about us."

"My dear child, if you are not joking, there must be a great mistake somewhere. Do you know, if Robert Hedley were alive he would inherit Staverton Towers. But he *must* be dead; I have every proof of it. You know," he said, turning to me, "it was chiefly to ascertain this that I went to Paris. He *must* be dead."

Nellie persisted, however. He had lived in Paris years ago, she said, but was now minister of a little Protestant community in the south of France; and such, on investigation, turned out to be the case. A Robert Hedley, a clergyman, corresponding apparently in other particulars, had died in Paris; but we had the reasons for assuring ourselves that it was not he.

An extract from one of his letters to his niece will best finish my story.

". . . Let Mr. Sandering, then, resume his occupation of the Towers without scruple, convinced that I should be unhappy in leaving my work here and adopting a new life at my advanced age. You are my only relative, and, if I have power to dispose of the property at my death, it will be yours; if not, it appears that your husband will inherit."

Sandering talked nonsense at first about having won Nellie under false pretences, and it being his duty to free her from the engagement; but she impudently asserts that, if he did go away, he would only want to come back again, as he had done before.

There is some question of entail which the lawyers have not yet decided, but, under any circumstances, there seems every probability that it will turn out to be a good match.

FACETIÆ

WHY is "naming the day" like a naval battle? Because it's a marry-time engagement.

A GUSHING reporter speaks of a bride's eyes as "bright as the buttons on an angel's underclothing."

QUILP (to Mrs. Q.)—"Well, how did you like the sermon, my dear?"

Mrs. Q.—"Oh, perfectly splendid. Such loves of bonnets!"

IT is pleasant to note the progress of refining influence and the broadening of social culture. Over the toilet appliances of a Boston boarding house is a sign bearing the words: "Don't wipe your nose on the towel."

THE recent spelling-match excitement can hardly have extended to all parts of the city. The following inscription is copied from a sign-board in front of a South street restaurant: "Strawbery Short cak, rost chikin dinner 40s."

A CATALOGUE of a well known bookseller perpetrates the following—unintentionally, of course. *Apropos* of a work on xylography, it says: "It contains sixty-nine engravings, either from wood or metal, twelve of which bear inscriptions representing scenes of Christian mythology, figures of patriarchs, saints, devils, and other *Dignitaries of the Church!*"

THE LONGEST NIGHT.—At Spitzbergen the longest night lasts three months and a half. This must certainly make it bad for young people who only do their courting Sunday nights. But, on the other hand, just fancy the sweetness long drawn out when this night happens to fall on Sunday! Three months of steady courting, looking fondly into each other's eyes, talking about the state of the weather, the crops, etc.

SCHOOL INSPECTOR (who notices a backwardness in history)—"Who signed Magna Charta?"

No answer.

Inspector (more urgently)—"Who signed Magna Charta?"

No answer.

Inspector (angrily)—"Who signed Magna Charta?"

Scapegrace (thinking matters are beginning to look serious)—"Please, sir, it was not me, sir."

FRED.

I was on the lower step;
Molly, on the next above,
Gave me her bouquet to hold,
Asked me to undo her glove;
Then, of course, I squeezed her hand;
Talked about my wasted life,
Ah! if I could only win
Some true woman for my wife,
How I'd love her—work *for* her!
Hand in hand through life we'd walk—
No one ever cared for me—
Takes a girl—that kind of talk.

MOLLY.

Earnest? I should think he was;
Why, I thought I'd have to laugh
When he kissed a flower he took,
Looking, oh! like such a calf.
I suppose he's got it now,
In a wine-glass on his shelves;
It's a mystery to me
Why men will deceive themselves.

OF ALL the freaks of the telegraph, the following is one of the most laughable. A young man, when about to start for his new parish, was unexpectedly detained by the incapacity of his Presbytery to ordain him. In order to explain his non-arrival at the appointed time, he sent the following telegram to the deacons of the church: "Presbytery lacked a quorum to ordain." In the course of its journey the message got strangely metamorphosed, and reached the astonished deacons in this shape: "Presbytery tacked a worm on to Adam." The sober church officers were sorely discomposed and mystified, but, after grave consultation, concluded it was the minister's facetious way of announcing that he had got married, and accordingly proceeded to provide lodgings for two instead of one.

OUR OWN SPHINX.

[Communications intended for publication in this department, should be addressed to care of Editor SATURDAY EVENING POST, Philada.]

A NUMERICAL CHARADE.

I am composed of 15 letters.
My 2, 3, 15 is an intoxicating drink.
My 10 is a letter of the alphabet.
My 2, 11, 8, 7, 2, 14 is a man's name.
My 9, 12, 3, 15, 14 is a part of the United States.
My 4, 12, 3, 7, 5, 8, 15 is a small village in New Jersey.
My whole is a story in the POST.

TRANSPOSITIONS.

1. Transpose to wash and form a valley.
2. Transpose what you are known by and form hair.
3. Transpose part of a wheel into a ceremony.
4. Transpose brutes and form liquors.
5. Transpose a poem and form an animal.
6. Transpose your favorite paper and quit. FORT TOTTEN.

DIAMOND PUZZLE.

(Nine letters.)

A consonant. A poet's name. Help. An article of dress for ladies. A writer of short poems. Superintended and a consonant. Poor. A color. A consonant. MARTIN J. SHERIDY.

RIDDLE-MA-REE.

Peter White
Will ne'er go right—
Shall I tell you the reason why?
Wherever he goes,
He follows his nose;
And that stands all awry!

In what relation standeth the said P. White's nasal organ to an article useful to butchers and cooks? C.

[Answers to the above will be given in No. 1, Vol. 55.]

Answers to "Our Own Sphinx." No. 47, Vol. 54.

ENIGMA.—An Enigma.

CHARADE.—Evening Hymn.

NUMERICAL CHARADE. — Charlotte Cushman.

BURIED TOWNS.—1. Carlisle. 2. Montreal. 3. Standish. 4. Lebanon. 5. Reading. 6. Santa Fe. 7. Beaver. 8. Berlin. 9. Oswego. 10. Mobile. 11. Muscat. 12. Renova. 13. Media. 14. Milo.

MY ROSE.

BY CATHARINE FILER WENTWORTH.

Red-light you are, and like a rose
Your cheeks wherein the blushes lie;
Perchance the dusky sky of eve
Does hence reflect its carmine dye
From some vague, sweet amity;
The stars within the west arise
And blast, with daz'ling, glad delight,
Replies unto your own fair eyes.

Sweet, are not roses and the stars
Most meet unconscious to frame you in,
A poet's love, a sculptor's love,
Whose face the painter's brush would win?
And are a poet's vanities,
That are the sweetest on the earth,
Half sweet enough to coin in words
And honeyed metre your dear worth?

Song, and the worship of the stars,
The dark-eyed painter laboring long
At a sweet labor may not be
So sweet as you, who, by my song,
Are lessened in your own true worth;
More worship lies in silent shows
Of love within the eager eyes
That gaze on you, my star, my rose.

A GIFT FROM HEAVEN!

BY PIERCE EGAN,

Author of "The Flower of the Flock," "Violet; or, the Wonder of Kingswood Chase," "Her First Love," Etc., Etc., Etc.,

CHAPTER XVII.—(CONTINUED.)

Harcourt had not previously overlooked this box; but, then, the curtains had been partially drawn across its face. Now they were put back, and disclosed half the form of a woman clothed in full dress—as the *decolleté* fashion is termed—in wondrous taste, and with consummate tact.

Her colorless skin was soft and polished as the finest ivory. The only color visible was in her daintily-shaped, compact lips, which were as scarlet as the small bouquet of geraniums she wore in the centre of her corsage. Her hair was worn quite plain upon the temples, confined, it seemed, by a narrow fillet or circlet of diamonds, and in the back, dressed in plaited folds, there was also a group of cerise flowers.

It was Lao!

Instinctively, Harcourt sank down into his seat, as though he expected to be detected by her in the commission of some contemptible act.

So he had discovered her in the act of—what should he call it?—flirtation! He gnashed his teeth as that interpretation sneaked, as it were, through his brain. And that when she had comfortably felt confident that he was out of reach by at least two hundred miles.

Behind her, but almost touching her shoulder with his face, sat Colonel De Rougemont, leaning forward, and with an expression of triumphant gratification playing on his features.

A revolver convenient to his grasp would have at that moment been a dangerous weapon to Harcourt.

Before, however, he could determine what would be the most politic step for him to take, the blonde exquisite at his side spoke again, and at once, as before, he became deeply interested in his remarks.

"Jupiter!" he lisped, creamily, "what eyes, and what a mounting! Perfectly unique! Yet I would sooner be in favor with her than at enmity. What a *diablesse*, I'll be sworn!"

His companion breathed very hard.

"She looks sleek and alluring too," he muttered, rather than said.

"Yes," answered the fair sprig of nobility; "oh—a—yes, so does a panther when it is playful; but could you not fancy her, if you enraged her, springing upon your throat with her teeth, and taking a long draught of your lifeblood?"

Harcourt felt a strange horror creep over him at these words.

"Aye!" replied the other, in a curiously vindictive undertone; "but she has more than one way of killing off those who are obstacles in her path. Do you not observe she has as much of the serpent as the panther—that she can crush the life out of you with the semblance of a caress?"

Harcourt shivered as though a cold blast had pierced him through and through. He had during his union with her never noticed this. She had silently and without demonstration assumed the sway, and he had yielded. He remembered that he had never thwarted her, and the panther had, therefore, always touched him with velvet paws, in which no claws had been perceptible; but now——

A moisture, hot and oppressive, appeared on his forehead in place of the chill.

"Serpent!" echoed the blonde exquisite, bending his lorgnette mercilessly on the face of Lao. "Well, yes, serpent—not an impossible combination. What a Lamia she would be with the panther's savagery added to her native poison! Wonder who she is. A foreign woman with the bar sinister?"

"No; born in England—only daughter of parents with a touch of the *parvenu*, who lived fast here, and died poor abroad."

"But she—is she married? There is high style about her. I wonder I never saw her before!" drawled the exquisite.

"Married—ha, ha! Married—ha! Why, yes, undoubtedly married, as much as if she had had the service read over her *twice*, to make assurance doubly sure."

Harcourt felt as if he had been smitten across the temples by a lash.

"The deuce! Why, you know her, of course?" remarked the exquisite.

"Did some years since."

"Oh, jiltings for one—eh?"

"Bah! Let us change the subject. She is looking this way, as if she divined we were talking of her."

"Not she! She has not once looked at us; but she has been positively staring at a very charming, sweet-faced creature a little way from us, very much as though she would like to make one spring at her and send her feathers up into the air in clouds. Odd, one is as much like a seraph as the other is like a Bel Demonio."

Harcourt failed to obtain a glimpse of the sweet-faced creature who had attracted Lao's malevolent glances, and the act drop falling at the moment, the two gentlemen who had been conversing rose and moved to depart.

He at once bent eagerly forward to obtain a sight of the face of him who had professed to know Lao in times gone by, and succeeded. But his blood curdled as he gazed upon an unearthly, cadaverous countenance, which might have been selected by Mephistopheles to wear on a visit to earth.

Then his heart gave a wild bound within him.

Why, that face was the counterpart of the photograph which Lao had acknowledged to him was *her* secret!

He could not be mistaken, although the complexion had an awful tinge which did not appear in the photograph.

Who was he? What was his name—where did he live? He knew something of Lao's early history, that was clear; but what? He determined to find out.

Upon an impulse he followed them out of the pit, and ascended to the box lobbies. He overtook them as he passed into the refreshment saloon, and slowly sauntered up close to them.

At this juncture he felt a hand laid sharply on his arm, and a husky voice cried:

"What, Harcourt, in England? Glad to see you! Was just going round to see Mrs. Harcourt. Saw her from the pit—looks charming as ever. Wonderful creature, is she not? Happy scoundrel you, eh?"

"Oh, admiral; delighted to see you," responded Harcourt, looking and speaking like one in a dream. "I am making my way to my wife's box."

"One moment—how fortunate! Do you see that fellow with the odd face there?" exclaimed the admiral, clutching his wrist, and indicating with his thumb the very individual whom Harcourt had been following.

He nodded. He could not speak.

"That is the greatest plunger on the turf. Princely fortune, but one of Nature's noblemen. Soul of honor, but down as a hammer in the hand of a frantic auctioneer. I want you to meet him—he dines with me at the Beaudesert to-morrow at eight. Will you join us? Now do."

Harcourt sprang at the invitation, but said, quietly:

"Shall be delighted. *Allons*, admiral, we will go to my wife."

Harcourt led the way, but with a light, swift, noiseless step. He bade the box-keeper in an undertone, and before the admiral could overtake him, open the door of Mrs. Harcourt's box quickly and without noise. A sovereign purchased acquiescence.

The door flew open, and he entered as he heard Lao say, in a tone which thrilled him to the marrow:

"I am fatal to those who love me!"

De Rougemont, who had evidently possession of her hand, let it fall, and sprang to his feet. For an instant, as he encountered Harcourt's eye, he looked horribly confused, and with an unmeaning laugh explained that, having observed Mrs. Harcourt from the other side of the house, he had presented himself to welcome her to England.

"Just my case," exclaimed Admiral Hardcastle, and launched a mass of hyperbolical compliments at Lao, which she did not affect to hear.

In less than two minutes Lao and Harcourt were alone.

"You have returned," she said, with studied iciness—effrontery, he thought it.

"You did not expect me so soon," he ventured, in a sarcastic tone.

"Um! Well—no. Yet I am not sure. North Devon is a failure?"

"Yes."

She laughed with a contemptuous curl of her lip.

"I knew that before you departed," she observed, with a sneer, which implied her disbelief in the professed object of his journey.

"Impossible," he responded, reddening, as was his custom when under examination and he knew that he was lying.

She waved her gloved hand with a contemptuous gesture, which made his blood boil as he thought of the situation in which he had just discovered her.

Then ensued a silence of a few minutes, and she raised her opera glass, and gazed steadfastly at an opposite box. Suddenly, with an abruptness which startled him, she turned, and laying down her glass, fastened her eyes upon him with a flash of light in them which dazed him.

"Have you that photograph with you—the one you carry *en secret*, you know? I should like to look at it again," she asked, in a sharp, incisive tone.

Was this a poor attempt at retaliation because of De Rougemont? He thought so, and as that awful face of the man he had arranged to meet at the Beaudesert with Admiral Harcastle loomed up before his mental vision he responded, with a tone as caustic as her own:

"At least, *you* had no need of that photograph moaned over by you as a substitute for the original to-night."

She stared at him with a surprise which was certainly not simulated. What did he mean? A question rose up to her bright vermilion lips—thin, cruel, savage they looked now—but no, she dared not put it.

With a gloomy frown of ill-humor she rose suddenly up, adjusted her burnous about her shoulders, and moved with a dash to the box door.

"Where are you going, Lao?" he asked, in angry surprise.

"Home!" she cried, showing her white teeth with a laugh that had the ring of steel in it.

Heedless of everything but her own wilful caprice, she sallied on alone at such a pace that he could not overtake her until she was arrested by the crowd in the crush room.

Many were leaving, but his resentment at her conduct prevented him seeing or noticing aught that was going on.

He heard without heeding the names of several people of title called to inform them their carriages were awaiting them. He listened only for his own name if he listened at all. He heard with indifference a hoarse cry:

"The Marchioness of Blanchefleur's carriage!"

The next! His own? No!

"Miss Florence Egerton's carriage stops the way," shouted the attendant.

That name! His heart bounded into his throat.

A young and gentlemanly man, having a lady on his arm, elbowed his way among the fashionable mob blocking the path to the stairway. As they passed slowly over the threshold the lady turned her face round towards him and her eyes on Lao.

But what a face! What a pure, lovely, sweet, sinless, saint-like face.

With a half affrighted expression in her soft, gentle, beautiful eyes, she turned them sharply away, and so vanished.

Harcourt stood white as marble—rigid as stone—paralyzed!

"Great heaven!" he thought. "Floye!"

And then he became conscious that Lao, with an ashen gray complexion, was regarding him with the inflamed eyes of a tigress.

CHAPTER XVIII.

LEO AND GIFTIE—A BOY'S CONCEIT.

Faith Twopenny, from a girl, when she first went out into the world, one of nine sisters, to commence her battle with life as a nurse to a two-year-old conceived a passion for little children. Nursemaid she elected to be, and nursemaid she continued up to the time when Shaphat Twopenny accidentally, while looking up in the air for a pattern of Christian excellence to follow, ran up against her in Regent's Park, tumbled her and a little baby girl over, and scattered them broadcast on the gravel walk, for which feat she kicked him over the shins until he declared, and even now alluded to it with tears of pride, that "they was a mask of gore."

Then and there her change came, for he fell in love with her.

With a face as red as a turkey's gills, and eyes sparkling like diamonds, she looked in his vision "a pattern of virtue and perpriety, p'intin' of the way to domestic bliss." She who could be so faithful and loving a shepherd to the lambkins in the domestic folds of others must certainly prove a bright and shining example in respect of a flock of her own.

So he made peace with her, came a wooing, and proposed, being in a position to keep her, with little additions planned out, in tolerable comfort; and she accepted him.

Not that she entertained an unthinking, fanatical, gone-goosedness about him, for, if her young heart had been stirred by love at all, it was by a fresh-colored butcher youth, with eyes like gleaming jet balls, and black hair, which shone with suet-like polished ebony.

But then Shaphat meant business, and the blue smock-frocked one was not disposed to go beyond "spoons."

Therefore, with the snap of a steel spring clasp, she closed with Shap, especially, be it understood, as she indulged in dreams of little "toddlekins" of her own, whom she should wash, and dress, and slap, and love beyond all other created things in the universe.

But, alas! the little "toddlekin" came and died away, and Harcourt appeared with a baby to take its place, which, with its golden hair, its dreamy blue eyes, and its clear complexion, looked for all the world like a "dear little wax doll." It may be imagined that, as she had this child under her exclusive control—for Harcourt only appeared when she had to press him sharply for payment—she became as passionately attached to it as if it were her own. So, apparently, did Shap; really, because it brought in an addition to their income.

In fact, Faith took its removal as much to heart as if she had lost a second child by death, and she would not take in another to wind round her heart, and have to part with it just as she began to idolize it. In vain Shap urged the advantages to accrue from bringing up a baby to turn out some day a fortune to them; she positively refused, and though he gnashed his teeth and commenced pacing as if on stilts—she pointed out that the copperstick was of knotted hawthorn, and effective in strong and willing hands, so he mingled his tears with hers, and resigned himself to the "dispersashuns of a hallwise Proverdence," and looked out for other opportunities to increase his store. Mainly, by usurious loans to poor members of his fraternity, who had to keep large families on scant pay.

Faith Twopenny, indeed, had never forgotten and never ceased to mourn the loss of her little nursling, and now it had been restored to her in so strange a fashion it brought back with it also a rush of maternal affection, which prompted her to endeavor to repair, as far as she possibly could, the mischief which had been done to the unhappy girl by indifference to her welfare—what indeed she regarded as criminal neglect. She resolved, too, with knitted brows and compressed lips, to compel Shap to treat Giftie with considerate kindness without hope of fee or reward.

She watched Giftie intently as she sat on the floor, plunged in a grief which she saw came up from the well of a desolate heart, and while her own tears fell fast, and her heart yearned to soothe and assuage the poor child's bitter sorrow, she let her weeping have its way, in the hope that, when exhausted, she would be amenable to the tranquilizing things she purposed saying to her.

But she reckoned without her host, for Giftie of a sudden sprang to her feet, and dashing away her hot tears with the back of her hand, shook her stream of radiant hair behind her, and cried, angrily and impatiently:

"I am a fool and a coward. What good will crying do me? No one cares enough for me to cry for me. Why should I cry for myself?"

Faith then went a few steps nearer to her, and said, in a soft voice:

"Crying will do no good, unless, perhaps to bring you to a better frame of mind, my dear child."

"Better frame of mind. What do you mean?" she asked, with a curiously suspicious air.

"That you should banish wild thoughts and impulses," responded Faith, speaking in her earnestness above her usual grasp of language; "that you should trust in those who have to guide you, and obey them, because they have only your happiness at heart."

Giftie laughed derisively, and curled her lip scornfully.

"That is the style in which that old viper, Marm Milborne, used to preach to me. She would say prayers over me when she tied me up and beat me with a rod till I was raw from shoulders to ankles, and sing psalms to me when she saw me gnawing a mouldy bone or the tongue of my boot while she was starving me into what she called 'a good frame of mind.' How I hated those words! How I vowed and vowed never to be good if to be good was to be in the least like that viperous old hypocrite."

Faith forced the cry that rose from her heart back, but she knelt down at Giftie's feet, and placing her hands on her shoulders, she looked tenderly and earnestly into her eyes.

"My love," she exclaimed, mournfully but tenderly, "in days long ago you were brought to me a sleeping babe. I took you to my bosom and fed you. From me you drew life, health, strength—such life and love as my soul can give to no other created thing not being my own child. That love, though it has slept, has never died out. I feel that now it has returned with tenfold force. Trust me, try and love me, and I will strive with all my might and strength to do all I can to make you happy—happy, oh, so happy."

Giftie looked sharply into the woman's eyes, thronged with glittering, crystal water. She seemed truthful and sincere. A shade of tenderness stole over her wild, elfish face, and a gentle sweetness of expression softened her sparkling eyes. Faith gasped as she noticed the change, and muttered to herself—

"It is she—it is she! I know her now! Oh, I know her now!"

"I think you mean what you say," presently spoke Giftie, thoughtfully, "and I feel that if you would ask me kindly to do anything I will do it—that is, unless I don't feel like it, then I won't—no, not for anybody in the world. But——"

She paused and looked wistfully at Faith.

"Go on, my darling," murmured the latter, softly.

"I want to know," she proceeded, slowly, "why, if you feel so much about me as to bring tears up into your eyes—if you gave me life and love, though I was no child of yours—what should she have done—what should she do—she—who is my—*mother?*"

She uttered the last word with a shrillness of accent which almost approached a scream.

Faith drooped her head, and partly averted her face.

Giftie, with piercing eyes fastened on her, waited her answer. None came. She stamped her foot angrily.

"Tell me! I will know!" she cried, excitedly. "You must know, and you shall tell me. What had I done to make her send me away when only a baby? I couldn't have done any harm—a baby—could I? Did I? If I did, tell me what."

Faith's only answer was a deep sigh and a look of unutterable pain.

"Am I—am I—a witch's brat—really?" she asked, with a huskiness in her throat. "They all vowed I was in Pendragon."

Faith wrung her hands, and with earnest words told her the assertion was a foul and wicked one.

"Nor a pixy's—a fairy's changeling?" she pressed.

Again Faith assured her that such was not the case, but that she was the daughter of a lady, who perhaps one day would recognize and receive her.

"I shall see her one day then?" she exclaimed, significantly.

Faith looked inquiringly at her.

"If it please heaven."

"I hope I shall. I so long to see her that I might curse her."

Faith shrieked, and placed her hand suddenly over her mouth.

"Judge not that you may not be judged," she cried, with emotion.

Giftie wrestled herself out of her hands.

"Why should I not?" she asked, fiercely. "You do not know what I suffered at Pendragon—scoffed at, beaten, pelted, scouted. You, who are not my mother, are kind to me, but she flung me into misery when I was an infant, to become she didn't care what. Oh, but I will tell her all I think when I see her."

Faith sought to combat this feeling as well as she could, but not with much success. She found, however, that promises of dress and trinkets, and the position of a young lady to be secured to her, did much to subdue her, and she saw her at night sink into a calm, peaceful slumber with a hope that she would yet be able to undo much of the evil that had been—she could not conjecture how—wrought in her, and fit her for a far better position.

Indeed, for the ensuing three or four days she found Giftie tractable, amiable, and, therefore, deeply interesting. The poor child had been so long unaccustomed to kind treatment that she was evidently impressed with Faith's tenderness to her, and was lured into exhibiting accomplishments in reading, writing, and a general knowledge acquired only by—for one of her age—extensive reading, which utterly amazed Faith, and made Shap set to work to calculate how much more she would be worth to him than he thought for.

Indeed, so quiet and well behaved was she that Faith, who had to provide her with a stock of clothes, had no hesitation in leaving her alone with Shap while she went shopping, although she knew that Shap must be away part of the time, too, attending to his duties as railway porter, and the providing himself with occasional refreshers of rum cold at the Flying Wonder. But he was enjoined to lock the cottage door when he went out, and he did.

It seemed as if he had been watched away from the cottage, for Giftie had been only left a few minutes by him reading the "Pilgrim's Progress," which Faith took in sixpenny numbers, when her attention was attracted by a sharp, low *sifflant*, like the chirping of a bird, proceeding from the open window.

She was reclining in a chair in an attitude of composed ease, and, without moving, she raised her eyelids and turned her gaze towards the window.

At it she saw a small, round ivory face, and a pair of large, brilliant black eyes blazing beneath the peak of a kind of jockey cap. She recognized the face in a moment. It was that of the saucy boy she had seen at the Lavenders' cottage. An impish, handsome face it was, and it sent her heart at once into a flutter—she had not the least notion why, though she was all unaccustomed to such emotion.

"May I come in, Titsy?" he asked, in a voice which sounded musically in her ear, very unlike the Pendragon boys. It was even sweeter and softer than Col's. "I want to speak to you."

She nodded without moving her position, and said, with a twinkling of her eyes:

"Don't be clumsy and upset the flower-pots."

"Feel dried up?—'tain't far to the door," he responded.

"Locked," she said, laconically.

"Flats to lock the door and leave the side of the cage open," he remarked, as he carefully removed three or four pots of scarlet geraniums from the window ledge and vaulted lightly into the room.

He stood still for a moment looking at Giftie, who had not moved, and then he took off his cap, smoothed his glossy, soft hair from off his forehead with the palm of his hand, and drew his cuff across his lips.

She sprang to her feet, and seizing up a small Malacca cane, which Shap took out with him on Sunday evenings when he felt aristocratic impulses steal over him, she dextrously cut down a wasp which had previously been circling under her nose and about her temples unheeded.

He showed her two rows of even, white teeth, and said:

"You're my style, Titsy."

"That disgusting name is not mine," she said, promptly.

"What is it?"

"Giftie. What is yours?"

"Leo, my clipping Giftie. You're a gift worth having. There's a good many I wouldn't have at a gift, but you, I'd go to a high bid for you, if it was necessary."

"Oh, isn't it?"

"No; I shall have you without."

She said "pff" with an extraordinary display of contempt.

"Don't lash out too soon," he said, with a meaning look. "Harkye, there's nobody in the crib."

"Not a soul, but we and the cat," she answered, comprehending him.

"Well lookye here. Have you got a father and mother?"

She recoiled a step at this question, and looked eagerly and searchingly into his eyes.

"Why?" she demanded.

"I mean—that you knows. Tell me, Beauty, for I think I've something strange to tell you. You hav'n't, have you?"

"N—o! What of it?"

"This: I hav'n't, either. Mary Lavender brought me up from a trot in short frocks, but she isn't my mother, and I don't know who is; nor my father—never saw, never heard of him; but I mean to, Giftie—I will, I will."

And he shook both his clenched hands.

"What is that to me?" she asked, but not without interest.

"This," he returned; "there's something up about me. A swell came the other day, with a face like a picklin' cabbage, and he and mam Lavender had a good deal of talk about me. Ah, I heard 'em talking, too, about some lady—my mother, perhaps; I don't know, but I shall, oh, I shall. Well, the other day you came along to our hutch with that tip top tuft with the straw mustarchers, and after you had gone I heard mam Lavender tell her old man, her father, that the straw mustarchers had married 'the very woman'—those were the words—and they both looked very hard at me as they said it. Now, he's your father, isn't he?"

Giftie pressed her hands to her temples and grew a little paler. Unlike the boy, the subject was evidently distressing to her; but as Leo pressed her for an answer she said, rather faintly:

"I think so. He told me to call him so down at Pendragon, and he found me out when nobody knew who I was at all."

He clapped his hands together, and he cried, vehemently:

"I know I'm right—I'm sure of it. Don't you see, if straw mustarchers married the very woman who was my mother—you—you must be—ha! ha!—my *sister*."

She uttered a little cry of amazement.

He drew up to her and caught her by the hands.

"I'll swear you are—I'll swear it. Oh my sis—my dear, darling little sis—kiss your poor brother—do, do, that's a sweet one. I never had—never had—never——"

The boy's lips quivered, and his eyes swam with tears.

Giftie, with a strange, mad impulse, flung herself on his neck and gave way to a great bubbling sob, and the boy kissed her with a vehement ardor which only too forcibly told how deep was the passion within that small frame, and how intensely he prized something in the shape of kin, never yet having known any one whom he could, in his own belief, claim or treat as such.

She, too, was carried away by the enticing supposition of having a brother, when she believed herself to be an outcast, without a tie of affinity, and it was a very dear one to her. Yet in a moment she wrested herself from his embrace, and fell back, panting, and with a flushing face.

But briskly he caught her two hands again, and held them fast in his. He fixed his large, lustrous, humid eyes on hers with a penetrating expression, as though he would probe her brain, as with a catching of the breath and all but chattering teeth, he whispered:

"You are my sis—I feel you are. I'd post a hundred to one in thous, if I had it, that you are. Still, let us make sure; find out all you can on the superlative quiet and tell it me. I will do the same to you. Can you write?—yes! that is ripping; so can I. Take this paper. Write there to me, 'Tiny,' that's what they call me in the stables. Put in your note where I can write, so that nobody will get it but you. Now, trust nobody, 'specially mam Lavender; not half a head—not a nose, an inch. She's like the Lady Bab mare, tricky, artful, and vicious. I owe her a score. Hark! What is that?" he interposed, suddenly.

Releasing her hands, he crouched down and crept to the window, like a cat craftily approaching an unconscious bird. He peered out for a moment, and was back at a bound.

"Mam Lavender and old Tubthumper Twopenny," he murmured, in an undertone. "Something's up; she's tipping him, and they're coming in here. Can't I slide out at the back somehow?"

She nodded, and opened a door which led out into the garden. He caught up both her hands again, and kissed them fiercely; then he looked with, for him, a singular loving tenderness into her eyes.

"My blessed sis," he muttered, as if with a choking throat. "Don't forget me, Poppy. Mind, mum as death! Tat-ta, Beauty."

He vanished, and she replaced the pots on the window-sill and closed the door swiftly, as the front door was unlocked from without.

She was, however, reclining in her chair, with the "Pilgrim's Progress" before glistening eyes which never saw a word, when she heard Shap Twopenny say, in a tone of voice loathsome to her:

"Here we are. There's our caged canary, Miss Lavender. She's a wild plant, but we'll make her a herb o' grace afore we've done with her. Have a chat with her, please, while I run back to the station. Sha'n't be long."

The door closed with a clang, and then Giftie knew she was alone with one who was more tricky, artful, and vicious than the Lady Bab mare.

CHAPTER XIX.

DEEPER AND DEEPER STILL.

The ride from the Opera House to the Cavendish was performed at a dashing pace by a pair of splendid bays, and it was accomplished in silence.

Lao threw herself back in the corner of the carriage like one exhausted by a long day's fatigue. Harcourt leaned his elbows on his knees, and bowed his face towards the rug in which his feet were

buried. Each were entombed, as it were, in the limbo of unutterable thoughts.

But his mind was like a fiery furnace, in which burned with a fierce blaze recollections as vivid as though they had just happened, and he were now seated in a railway carriage, cold to the bone, and prostrate with a misery so dire as to surpass all comparison.

Floye!

Yes; Floye alive, breathing, moving:

"A shadow of some golden dream."

Not drowned! not dead—thanks—soul-grateful thanks to the All Merciful!

So the gloomy cloud of a nameless, unpardonable crime was lifted from his heart.

Alive—so tenderly, sweetly beautiful, as though her blooming had come now to show him that his undiscerning eyes had never foreseen what her budding promised.

And now he felt a welling up from his soul, which filled his throat and eyes, and made his heart ache. He became conscious that he now loved her with a resistless passion that made him at once yearn to make her his again at every cost, and in the face of any opposition, spring from what quarter it might.

Yet how?

Oh, how completely he found himself, on trying to solve this problem, entangled in a web of his own weaving—shackled by fetters of his own forging. Before he could see a move in the direction of his intention, the carriage was drawn sharply up before the door of the Cavendish, even at the moment that he heard, or fancied he heard, a deep-drawn, woe-begotten sigh break from the lips of Lao.

And now they were again alone together, for in imperious terms Lao had dismissed the attendants. She paced the room with a perturbed air for a few moments, while he rested his elbow upon the mantelpiece, an l suffered the tips of his fingers to press on his eyelids.

There was an explanation to come. Which was to begin it?

It is not difficult to surmise. In lovers' quarrels and matrimonial squabbles it is the rule for the gentler sex to have the first and last word.

Lao was no exception to the rule.

She paused suddenly before Harcourt, and startled him with a peal of laughter which had such a mocking, icy ring in it, as to cause a disagreeable thrill to pass through him. He flung down his arm and confronted her.

She drew nearer to him; he folded his arms across his chest, and greeted her with knitted brows and compressed lips.

She did not heed this repellent aspect, but placed her two hands gently on his forearms, and moving her face near to his, so that he inhaled an odor that might have sprung from blossoms in Elysium, laughed again the "unreal mockery" of a laugh.

"Harcourt, dear," she said, in the tone a fond mother would adopt when soothing a petulant child, "let us take counsel together, my poor boy."

He felt as if he could fling her from him to the farther end of the room, but there was the sparkle of the serpent when preparing its fatal spring in her eyes, which kept him motionless and silent.

"Do you not see," she went on in the same tone, "that our position is curiously ambignoue—I should say unique? We met, saw, conquered. We were not lovers. No, in very truth. What is love? I never felt it. Shall I—is it too late?"

"I am in no mood for childish folly," he said, curling his upper lip, and disclosing his white teeth; "I am weary."

"Of the world—of me—of your arduous efforts to find me a fitting home—is that it? Nay, pet, you shall not fling off my touch," she proceeded, in a mocking voice, which irritated him greatly. "You shall listen to all I intend to say to-night. You cannot help yourself, for at last the hour has come when we must make a clean breast of that which has hitherto kept us so wide apart, though holding such near relations——"

He made a quick, though slight gesture of dissent.

"Or," she added, speaking more rapidly, "we must continue to be as we have been—look up our thoughts—*ask no questions, whatever happens*, and await the *end*. Think over that for a minute, calmly, and make your choice. But make it. You shall neither dally with nor pander to both."

He was startled by her sudden energy, but the decision, if it must be made, seemed easy enough, because for him to tell any living soul, much more Lao, what had passed between him and Floye, was simply out of the question. Yet to ask no questions whatever might happen so long as they were together, after what *had* happened that night, appeared equally absurd.

He knitted his brows, and removed her hands gently but firmly from his arms.

"We have never been in the position in which we are now," he said, coldly. "It is one I do not intend shall exist another day. I have seen too much to-night for that."

She laughed again in a very unpleasant tone.

"What! jealous, Harcourt?" she cried, with a palpably forced sprightliness, and in spite of his recoiling from her, rested her hands once more upon his arms. "Then is there some hope for poor Lao, after all?"

She uttered these words in a soft, thrilling voice that electrified him. And she raised her dark eyes and fastened them upon his with a dreamy, passionate glance, as though she would draw his whole soul to hers.

Never from the first moment of their meeting had she lavished such a look on him. Never had he heard her voice tremble as it did now with such deep, inward emotion, and with so much seeming devotion.

"Let us end the situation, then," she murmured, in a soft, fond, pleading voice. "London is no place, it is clear, for you or for me. Let us shake the dust of our wretched memories from out feet, and go to another land. In Vienna, in America, even in St. Petersburg we can move in brilliant circles and live happily. We have no home here—we cannot have, for you seem to shrink from every face that seeks yours, and I—well, I never knew what home was. Let us solve that problem one—ten thousand miles away. Let our future life be a round of enjoyment in high and bright society—and of *love!*"

Had she thus gazed upon him and so addressed him when first they were married, it is hard to say what might have ensued; but now he looked upon her as his evil genius—his retributive spirit for his infamous behavior to Floye—so the picture she painted in such alluring colors held out no promise of a future joy to him.

Indeed, he had no doubt that this display of ardent love was simulated—was mere acting. That, though she was quite capable of feeling the throes of the most intense passion, he had never inspired it, and never would.

As this thought crossed him he dropped his arms, and suffered hers to fall to her side.

"You mistake me," he said. "The warm breath of honeyed words will not render me as pliable as wax, to be moulded into any form you may choose. But I am in no mood for talk to-night. To-morrow we will discuss the present and the future."

She paled as if a planetary light had suddenly illumined her face, shoulders and arms. She fastened her large black orbs upon him with a baleful look, which would have made a man with a higher organization sick with fear. It moved Harcourt but little. He saw that it was venomous and revengeful, but then he knew her to be capable of such emotions, and it would be for him to provide against their evil influences.

She snatched up her richly adorned opera cloak and covered her form with it up to the throat, shivering as if a sudden blast of frosty air had filled the chamber, and moved with a queenly step to the door. When she had gained it she turned, and in steady, even tones, said:

"Be it so. The position is clear. From this hour we shall, I suppose, both select our battle ground. Do not underrate my enmity. You have a position which, from some hidden cause, you know to be insecure. Do not mistake me. I have a will of iron—a heart of adamant—a passion for revenge when scorned, and I never forgive."

She moved over the threshold with a sweeping motion, but he arrested her.

"Stay," he said, sternly; "one word. Ten years ago both you and I undertook to guide the hand of fate—you know with what result. Do you not think you may spare your boastings, and accept the inevitable?"

"I am not likely to forget or to undervalue the lesson," she rejoined, significantly, yet scornfully. "In proof, you have cast down the gauntlet; I take it up. To-morrow or any other day—do not hurry on my account—we will discuss our very peculiar relations, and then—war to the knife! Mark me, I have thrown away the sheath, and no appeals for mercy from you can ever make me take it up again."

She disappeared with a strange light in her eyes which he knew meant mischief, but he only curled his lip—but savagely, too.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

BLESSEDNESS.

SINGLE, DOUBLE AND TRIPLE.

BY SADIE.

"I will never marry, never!" said William Blake to his father, a patient, weary-looking old man, with thin gray hair streaking across his bowed head.

He answered, reflectively:

"Well, I think you're right. There are men who can manage women, but your mother has been too much for me."

"It seems half selfish to me to go off and leave you alone with her; but what can one do, with work that wants planning, and the continual scolding in one's ears."

"It's the crying fits that masters me, though," said Mr. Blake; "when she sits sniffing into her apron, looking at me that reproachful, till I am half brought to believe that I have committed murder or something in my sleep."

"I sometimes think, do you know, father, that in those times it is that she is sorry for her temper—is, in fact, repenting."

"It is an awfully unpleasant, unfair kind of penitence, then. But I don't know. She's been buzzing in my ears so long, that I get fairly bothered sometimes, and don't feel clear about anything."

"I'll tell you what you must do when she gets past bearing. Just come off to me. It won't be far, you know."

"So I will, my boy; so I will.

Accordingly the next morning, when Mrs. Blake began the day with prophetic indications of being what she called "upset," her husband prepared to escape, greatly to her displeasure. She had resented Will's removal and "setting up for himself," but then, as Mr. Blake remarked, "she couldn't be any crosser than she was before," so he departed in comparative comfort.

Will's room was a poor little place. He was not earning much as yet, and he said, "Anything does for one's self," with a desolate air that somewhat contradicted his philosophy of loneliness. Still, his work improved wonderfully, and in that he was always happy. Will was a designer of mouldings.

Mr. Blake found him busily stitching at an old coat.

"Turned tailor, Will?" he asked.

"'Tisn't work enough for a tailor, and I am afraid my bungling would not pass for one, either. I tried glue, but somehow it would'nt answer, and one must keep one's self decent looking. I am going after orders by and by."

"Women is of some use, after all, if they wasn't such unreasonable creatures," said the father, with an involuntary glance at the table, which looked rather like the wreck of a kitchen, heaped up, as it was, with a little of everything.

Will was accustomed to have all his tools round him in his work, and so had gradually gathered the household implements together in the same fashion.

"We will have breakfast, presently," he said. "It would have been ready before, only while I was gone for a loaf the kettle boiled over."

"It won't do that this time," said Mr. Blake, lifting the tilted vessel from the fire.

"Why?"

"See!"

Then they both laughed. Will had forgotten to put in the water.

But the blunders were soon remedied; there was no one to scold over them.

Father and son were chatting pleasantly over the end of their meal, when a bright young voice was heard on the landing outside, calling:

"Willie! Willie!"

"Made friends already?" asked Mr. Blake, looking up, surprised.

"No; it is somebody that lodges overhead; her little brother has run off down stairs. He seems to give her a deal of trouble, but she never speaks sha than that."

"Don't she now? It is a wonderful pleasant-sounding voice."

By and by it seemed that the culprit was hunted up the stairs home again; a merry hunt, with much laughing on both sides, and, as they passed Will's door, a quieter "Willie! Willie!"

Mr. Blake looked strangely reflective.

"I haven't heard anybody say 'Willie' in just that cooing, careful way, not since my sister that died. She was just like a mother to me. It's a terrible long while ago."

"These two are much the same. They live alone. She minds him and keeps him, and sends him to school."

"You seem to know all about her, Will?"

"All I am likely to know. I have not seen her. There are no strangers like fellow-lodgers, and she is not the kind of girl to meet on the stairs, accidentally, for the purpose."

"That was how your mother and I got acquainted."

"I did not know that, father."

Will spoke with an air of regretful apology that was understood and accepted, but silently.

Dreamily, in the hush of old memories, the father walked away to his work.

Will sat down before the window to finish some drawings, but the thick square pencil made idle marks, while the eyes that should have guided it sought the only bit of nature within sight, the strip of changing sky between the housetops. Many a bold design had come from those sweeping cloud kaleidoscopes. None came now. Will was musing. How could a man work, with that sweet, imperious "Willie! Willie!" ringing in his ears? It was a worse distraction than his mother's scolding, for he could not be sure that he really wanted to forget this.

"I am glad I have never seen her," he said, with a long breath that did not sound like content. Then he tried to say "Willie!" in her tones, and, as a look of impatient disgust marked his consciousness of failure, he put on his cap and went out.

The haunting voice became a presence all too soon. As Will came home she met him in the passage; a little, swift-gliding figure, with soft, dark eyes set in a pale, fair face. "Not a bit like mother," he thought, with a curious feeling of satisfaction; but, as she passed, he saw that her eyes were humid with fear and grief.

"What is the matter?" he asked, involuntarily.

"Willie! cholera! the doctor!" she answered, rushing by, into the street that was wet with a stormy rain.

"Stay! I can go faster," cried Will, following her. "You go back to your brother."

She obeyed at once with the quick docility of a gentle intelligence; and he thought again, "Mother would have talked for an hour."

The doctor came soon, but not soon enough. Willie was very ill.

Bravely the little fellow struggled, but the foe was too strong for him.

The child died. There was nothing more to be done for him. All at once, for the first time in *his* little life, Willie wanted—nothing; not even his sister. She went about her necessary work with an oppressive, bewildering sense of leisure upon her. And Will—if the joyous voice alone had distracted him so, how could he work now—now that it recalled the meek, desolate face of the mourner; now, that the cry had changed into such a pitiful, beseeching "Willie! Willie!"

The day after Willie was buried, it happened that Will paid his rent, and took that opportunity to inquire after his fellow lodger.

"Poor young thing," said the motherly landlady, "it makes my heart ache to see her, up there in the little room, where they were so happy, those two. She says the very walls seem written with his name, and the things he used to touch cry, "Alice, Alice," just as he called for her, at the last; it is enough to craze her; there isn't an empty room in the house, or she should have it for a bit."

"Ask her to change with me," said Will, eagerly; "tell her I should be so glad, if she would not mind; the light there would suit me better."

Alice consented doubtfully. "It seems like deserting Willie," she said; "and yet one has no right to let one's self get ill; tell Mr. Blake I accept his offer gratefully."

She had grown a little stately in her solitary grief, and Will stammered over his premeditated speech. "My name is Willie, too; couldn't you take me for your brother?"

"Oh, no," she answered with direct simplicity, "he was so naughty, the darling; I never could have him out of my thoughts for a moment."

Alice herself had this kind of naughtiness for Will, and now living, in her room, he seemed to be encompassed by her presence; his tools and work felt rough and course amidst the little dainty arrangements that marked a woman's hand.

"If it hadn't been for knowing mother," he mused, one evening, "I might fall in love, I do believe; as it is, I know better."

So, "knowing better," he shrunk from an intercourse that might, in some sharp answer, bring Alice down from her pedestal, on which he still chose to place her, justifying his bright dreams to himself by saying, "It is pleasant to 'make believe,' as the children say."

Alice, meanwhile, had found a cheering employment in putting Will's room straight, as she called it. "Such a pity, poor man, for him to live in such a muddle, and him so clever, too."

She had found some torn drawings, and carefully smoothed them out as treasures overlooked.

Will, coming for a book, found her thus busy, and said, smiling:

"They are of no use—I don't want them."

"They seem wonderful to me," she said, looking up frankly.

"Ah! just as women's work does to us. I put a button on my cuff this morning, and it is off already."

"Let me sew it; I have a needle here."

Will muttered something about "troubling her," but she answered, "I ought to do anything I can; you don't know what good the change of rooms has done me. I suppose it is like rich ladies going out of town."

"You have made a grand improvement here," said Will, looking around; the same room, the same furniture; but what had been a dreary confusion was now a fair peace.

"I wish you would stay here always," he added.

Alice was brought to answer, "I do not mind," not understanding him; but something in Will's eye made her own droop, the little fingers trembled over their work; suddenly, Will's hand caught them. "Alice, will you stay here? will you let me love you—be my wife?"

She shrank away from him. "I must not—I must not,"

"Why not? tell me, darling."

"Mother said, when she died, 'Child, never marry.' Father made her so wretched."

"We are kindred in trouble, then, that is all," said Will; "mother, somehow, tormented my father so, that I resolved to live and die alone—let us both give up our hard purposes—will you, Alice?"

Will's tones pleaded better than his words; they gained him the victory.

From the wreck of the past seemed to spring a bright future, like the flowers from out of last year's dead leaves.

By and by there was a wedding; the motherly landlady gave Alice away, and Will took her as the great gift of his life.

As they came home from church, he said, brightly, "We have both resigned single blessedness, what shall we have instead?"

She nestled close to him and answered, "Double blessedness."

Peacefully and brightly the years went on, till even old Mr. Blake learnt to believe in youth and love and happiness; more especially, when a little fairy granddaughter came to clasp his hand and toddle in his footsteps.

One day, when for a wonder, Will's sleeve had no button, he came to his wife for her to sew one on; something in her attitude, as she sat before him with the morning sunshine on her hair, reminded him of that first work of hers when his love grew up almost in a night.

"Do you remember the first button you put on for me, like a fetter round my wrist, cunning Alice?" he said, smilingly.

"Would you be loosed now, if you could?" she asked, with a tender look of defiance.

"Ah, no! this, our life is"—a tender, merry voice broke in, calling, "Father!"—he ended, with a thankful sigh, "Triple blessedness!"

FIGHTING A CONGER.

BY J. K. G.

Several years ago, when on a visit to England, I was residing near Plymouth, in Devonshire, on the coast. My host, who was much given to piscatorial matters, one day requested my assistance to capture the sea-serpent, or, at any rate, a respectable imitation of that creature. It took several lectures of my learned friend to enlighten me fully on the subject of conger-hunting, and at last I consented.

Fighting a fish was a new sensation, a new excitement, a new exercise on a new element. The sun had gone down, when Johnny Morgan gave me an oar to pull the boat to the mooring-place, some five miles away. There were several boats on the ground where congers most abound, and that place was the Mewstone, near Plymouth, Devon, England.

The night was calm and lovely. Not a breath stirred, not a wave stirred; all around was as noiseless as the shades of death, save the occasional splash of an oar. It was a stilly starlit night, the very time propitious for conquering congers. Our boat was on the wave, her moorings in the sea, the great fish wandered to and fro, and wondered who were we!

"Take them hooks and lines out of the stern of the boat, and bait the hooks with that mackerel," whispered Johnny.

Congers are just as great cannibals as ever were human beings. If some of our brethren like roast missionary, congers like raw mackerel. We had carefully baited our hooks, and slid them over the side of the boat, and waited for the bell to ring, that we might entertain strangers, if perchance they should call.

We had scarcely commenced, when Johnny suggested that a stranger was jerking the other end of our line. We at once made preparations to receive the stranger in due form—gaff and hatchet were at hand. We hauled the line carefully at first, letting out a little occasionally as the ocean stranger required, and finally landed, or rather floored, a young conger, about twenty pounds.

The boat commenced to move—the stern swung around slowly, but gradually, until it had boxed the compass.

"Whom have we here?" said Johnny; "the sea-serpent has got us in tow; must have swallowed our moorings, and is about to take us out to sea," for at that moment the boat ceased its circular movement, and commenced to move in a direct line seaward.

The fact was, a very large conger had hold of a line over the stern of the boat, and was merely making a circuitous route to find out what he had hold of, or what had hold of him; in so doing he had entangled the line several times around the rope attached to the moorings, and so powerful was the fish that he moved the boat, moorings and all, for nearly a quarter of a mile!

"This won't do!" cried Johnny, "in with the rope and moorings, and let's see what the deuce has got hold of it."

We soon found it to be a conger, and had the fish near the gunwale of the boat, when all at once he floundered away with a sudden jerk, carrying Johnny overboard with him, gaff and all.

Here was some sensation, and a great deal of excitement, as the sequel will prove. Johnny was soon aboard again, having the rope in his hand, or rather a part of it, for the fish had bitten the rope in two, just above the moorings; the fishing line, however, he could not manage to get off with.

I proposed cutting the hook-line, and letting him go; but Johnny's blood was up, and he declared that himself or that fish must die! Fortunately securing our gaff, we determined to do our best to get him on board and despatch him.

After making every preparation, we commenced to haul him in, but had several times to give him line again, until we considered we had exhausted his strength, and would now have him either by hook or by crook, or both.

"Stand by with that gaff," said Johnny, "and as soon as you have a chance, let him have it; and, when he is in the boat, let that hatchet open his head."

No sooner said than done. We boated him, and he made us bolt. I was about to raise the murderous weapon—the hatchet—when his tail came into collision with some part of my body, removing me several yards from the boat into the water. It was well I could swim.

During my absence Johnny had a fair stand-up fight with the monster. The fish twice knocked the hatchet out of his hand, and knocked him down afterward. In fact, he cleared the boat, for we had to hold on to the gunwale on the outside until the fish died from exhaustion. He weighed ninety-five pounds.

THIRTEEN AT DINNER.

There are very few minds which are wholly free from superstition. Much as a man may deride the superstitions of his friends, it will generally be found that he has some pet one of his own. There certainly are feelings of this kind which have a powerful hold on the minds, not only of the ignorant, but of those whose education and experience might be expected to relieve them of all such notions.

Addison derided such fancies more than a hundred years ago, in the papers in which he describes the dejection of the friend with whom he goes to dine, in consequence of his wife having dreamed a strange dream, which he accepted as a portent of misfortune; and in the same paper he alludes to the apprehension as to sitting down thirteen to dinner. This is still among the most common of popular superstitions. It has been recalled in an incident which has just taken place in Paris.

There assembled lately in that capital a party who sat down to a sumptuous supper. The only lady present passed among them by the name of La Reine Aline. She appeared to be as jovial as the rest up to a certain point of the entertainment, but just as the champagne began to circulate her majesty's manners underwent a marked change. She became silent, gloomy, abstracted.

Rallied upon her melancholy mood, Queen Aline averred that evil was impending. Yes, she knew it only too well there was—dreadful to relate—thirteen at dinner! Presently a quarrel took place, during which the discreet proprietor privately betook himself to the Commissary of Police. Now it is proverbially an ill wind which blows nobody good, and even thirteen at dinner may bring luck in some way.

This official, then, found in the convivial party precisely those whom he "wanted." La Reine and the rest proved to be a gang of extensive dealers in lucifer matches, on which they habitually forgot to pay the Government duty. These they hawked around the environs of Paris and occasionally added to their profits by pilfering. In fact, La Reine's rooms were the repository of a large collection of valuables which had been in the possession of divers respectable denizens of the Banlieue.

It will be seen how accurately her gloomy vaticinations as to the thirteen at the table were fulfilled; nor did she fail to attribute the misfortune which had overtaken her entirely to this unlucky number, thirteen.

WAYS OF THE WORLD.—The ways of the world are strange and devious. Yet there is great good in it, for "a touch of misfortune maketh all mankind kin." Many a man deeply engrossed in business, hurrying along the pathway of life, absorbed in worldly cares, turns now and then aside for retrospection and kindly acts. And these are the flowers he strews along the highway of his earthly existence.

EXPRESSION.—Where the mouth is sweet and the eyes intelligent, there is always a look of beauty, with a light heart.

RECEIPTS
GENERAL AND DOMESTIC

AFTER windows are fresh and free from all dust, rub them with old, soft, crumpled newspaper. The glass will be as clear as crystal.

A MEDICAL paper says that "allspice is a sovereign remedy for croup, cutting the phlegm almost instantly, and inducing free breathing."

GREEN FIRE.—Take forty-two parts of nitrate of barytes, eight of sulphur, three of chlorate of potass, and one of lampblack (fifty-four parts in all).

TO REMOVE KEROSINE OIL FROM CARPETS.—Scrub the oil spot thoroughly with hot water in which either ammonia or ox gall has been put. Repeat the process if necessary.

TO MAKE FURNITURE OIL.—Take linseed oil, put into a glazed pipkin with as much alkenet root as it will cover. Let it boil gently, and it will become of a strong red color; when cool it will be fit for use.

BLUE FIRE.—Nitrate of barytes, seventy-seven parts by weight; sulphur, thirteen parts; chlorate of potass, five parts; realgar, two parts; charcoal, three parts. Mix, and inflame with a lighted match.

RED FIRE.—Take forty parts of nitrate of strontium, thirteen of sulphur, fifteen of chlorate of potass, four of sulphuret of antimony, and two of lampblack. These must be rubbed in a ladle, and well mixed.

FIVE parts of sifted whiting mixed with a solution of one part glue, together with a little Venice turpentine to obviate the brittleness, makes a good plastic material which may be kneaded into figures or any desired shape. It should be kept warm while being worked. It becomes as hard as stone when dry.

TO GET RID OF ANTS.—Lay old bones or sponges saturated with molasses and water where they most do congregate, taking away everything else edible from that locality. When the bones are black with them or the sponges populous with them give them a bath in scalding water. This remedy is tedious, but it is effective.

TO KEEP MOTHS FROM PLUSH FURNITURE.—Twice a year, on a bright sunny day, take it out of doors, remove the bottoms from the chairs, if they can be removed, and give the cushions a good switching with long, pliable switches till the dust is removed. Then with a brush go all over them thoroughly. While the cushions are being sunned give the frames a coat of varnish. Let the furniture remain in the sun nearly all day.

ORNAMENTS FOR THE YARD.—Take an old stump, or section of a tree, about three feet high, and two and a half feet through. It can, of course, be any size desired. In the centre fasten, firmly, a post six feet high, and from the top of this, two feet, fasten a cross piece three feet long. At the ends of this suspend rustic baskets, filled with running and hanging vines. From the baskets to the top of the post stretch cord or wire for the vines to run on. Tack bark all over the stump, letting it extend about six inches, fill with dirt, plant bright moss, verbenas, and vines around the centre post, and you will say, "A thing of beauty is a joy forever."

NEWS OF INTEREST

ON the Continent water-cress is served up round roast and boiled meats, to which it serves as a condiment.

SAN FRANCISCO'S new three-million-dollar palace hotel will contain a ladies' billiard-room furnished in princely style.

HORSE is eaten openly and without reserve in Sweden, generally in September, or after the summer heats are over. Various preparations of colt and filly may be seen entered without disguise upon all bills of fare about the fall of the year.

ONE of the most wonderful cities in the world is Bankok, the capital of Siam. On either side of the wide, majestic stream, moored in regular streets and alleys, extending as far as the eye can reach, are upwards of 70,000 neat little houses, each house floating on a compact raft of bamboos; and the whole intermediate space of the river is one dense mass of ships, junks, and boats of every conceivable shape, color, and size.

PERHAPS the heaviest piece of main-line traffic in the world is that on the London and Northwestern Railway between London (Euston station) and Rugby—a section 83 miles long. On this section the following trains run through: 30 express mail trains at 40 miles an hour; 5 at 36 miles an hour; 29 passenger trains at lower speeds, and stopping at all stations; 32 express goods trains at 20 to 25 miles an hour; 27 ordinary goods trains, and 28 local goods and mineral trains—making a total of 83 freight trains in 24 hours.

A SUCCESSION OF BLOOM.—There are two methods of keeping up a succession of bloom in beds of annuals; the first is by preventing any of the plants from going to seed by cutting off all the faded flowers and stems, and then giving a top-dressing of very fine compost, and keeping the plants supplied with water when the weather is dry; in this way you can be sure of a constant supply of flowers. Sweet Peas will blossom from June until the frost withers them, by cutting off all the old flowers. The second mode is by keeping a large reserve of annuals sown in pots later in the season, and transplanting them in the bed, then pulling up the worn-out plants.

THE LATEST PATENT MEDICINE.—The Tartar physicians, or Llama doctors, have long superseded infinitesimal doses, as, if they do not happen to have any medicine with them, they are by no means disconcerted, for they merely write the name of the remedy they wish to give on a little scrap of paper, moisten this with the saliva, roll it up into a pill, which the patient tosses down his throat with the same perfect confidence as he would aloes, assafœtida, or any other remedy. To swallow the name of the remedy, or to take the medicine itself, say the Tartar physicians, comes to precisely the same thing. If paper is not at hand, the name of the drug is written with clay or chalk upon a board, which is then washed off, and the patient swallows the liquid.

NOTHING astonishes the English more than our system of barreling apples. In that country the crop is placed thinly on shelves, in fruit houses constructed especially for the purpose, and no one thinks of sending them long distances to market. Our Rhode Island Greenings and Baldwins, therefore, which now go there in immense quantities, surprise them considerably. A good deal of this is, perhaps, due to the varieties we send there. A few years ago the Newtown pippin was the great American apple in the London market; but since the failure of that variety, those two named have in a measure taken its place. It is not, however, that these apples should reach the English markets in such excellent condition after being merely barreled up, that so astonishes the English; the price is also a wonder; for after being sent so far they can still be sold at a price the English can hardly touch with their own fruit.

BEGGING has become a fine art in England, and the tramps who go about the country making a livelihood out of the sympathies of the public have well-defined routes and conduct operations with much system. In London and the large towns they have an alphabet of chalk marks, which they put on doors and other places to indicate the character of the residents and the chances of obtaining aid. These marks indicate, 1st, this road is better than the other; 2d, they will buy if you have what they want; 3d, good food or something to eat; 4th, religious, but good on the whole; 5th, no good; 6th, spoilt by too many tramps coming; 7th, likely to have you taken up; 8th, dangerous, sure of being sent to prison. These marks serve as guides to the professional mendicants. Residents in American cities and larger towns have been startled sometimes by finding their doors or gate-posts curiously marked with chalk. Can it be that our American tramps are adopting the English system?

$50,000 WILL BE PAID FOR ANY remedy which will cure Chronic Rheumatism, Pains in the Limbs, Back and Chest, Sore Throat, Insect Stings, Croup, Dysentary, Colic, Sprains and Vomiting, quicker than Dr. Tobias' Venetian Liniment, established in 1847; never fails. Sold by the Druggists. Depot, 10 Park Place, N. Y.

A Harmless

And most delightful toilet preparation for beautifying the complexion and preserving the skin is Laird's "Bloom of Youth." Genuine prepared only by George W. Laird. It is perfectly simple and pure, and warranted free from any material detrimental to health. It is far superior to the old fashion beautifiers, such as powders, chalk, meen fun, etc., etc., for imparting youth and beauty to the skin. The "Bloom of Youth" is preferable to any other preparation offered for the same purpose. Sold at all druggists and fancy goods stores.

Depot, 9 Gold Street, New York. Price 75 cents.

OBSERVATIONS ON

NASAL CATARRH.

An abstract from a forthcoming work on diseases of the throat and air-passages, by A. N. WILLIAMSON, M. D., late Clinical Physician in the University Medical College, New York City. Mailed to any address for 10 cents. Address the author, 28 East 20th street, N. Y.

Dr. WILLIAMSON'S great success in the treatment of Catarrhal and throat and lung affections, renders valuable whatever comes from his pen."—*Journal of Medical Science.*

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PATCHING AND DARNING.

BY MARGARET EARLE.

Homely words and homelier work. And to every housewife, whose limited means necessitates a close economy, these two words have a world of unhappy meaning. They are suggestive reminders of many a wearisome hour of headache, and heartache as well—reminders of these, and suggestive, also, of many more to come. "Aye, there's the rub." If the future held no more in store, the past, with its irksomeness, would gladly be left with the bygones.

No one need talk to me of the beauties of darning and repairing, of the wide field it opens for nicety and skill. Have I not tried it in every possible style? Have I not darned both my eyes and all my wits out of my head? and set patches in garments, making larger rents in my temper the while? And if, when done, I have for a moment been cheated into a smile of self-satisfaction as I held it up and felt it was so skillfully done as to look "smaist as well as new," was not the momentary feeling quickly subdued by the consciousness that the next time it came from the wash the operation would have to be repeated in some other part of the garment?

Now, I should like to know if anything could be more depressing or exasperating—except washing dishes. *That* is the lowest depth of unsatisfactory labor. It is bad enough for the poorest kitchen scullion, but for a lady of culture and refinement, who, by stress of circumstances, is compelled to be her own servant, it is simply torture. To go through the same process three times a day, for three hundred and sixty-five days in the year! Into the skillful preparation of food one can enter with some degree of interest; but to rise from each meal, gather up the dishes, wash and set them away, knowing that in three or four hours they are all to be brought out again and the same process repeated—and to do all this 1095 times in a single year—it becomes, after a little, an instrument of positive torture to a cultivated, sensitive woman.

No one could long endure the ceaseless drip of water on a single spot of the human body without driving them to madness; and it is much the same with the ceaseless return of this one item, merely, of a woman's daily work.

This is far worse than patching, but that is bad enough—in a large family of roystering boys, for instance. Oh! if those patches and darns could only speak! How much patience and self-sacrificing love have been sewed in with each stitch—how much self-control, when the weary, over-tasked nerves have had to strain themselves to the utmost to keep back the quick, impatient word. But love triumphed and a victory was gained—do you call it a trifling one? God does not, and in place of the harsh word came the gentle tone and the pleasant smile.

Patches, do them ever so neatly, are at the best unsightly. We have all seen people "weak of will and infirm of purpose," whose characters were only a succession of patches. However put in order they may be at one moment, we know the next breath of temptation will make a new rent in their good resolutions. They are no more reliable for good, strong service than the patched garment that finds its way weekly into the mending basket.

And the best of us have an infinite series of darns. The warp and woof of human character never yet was woven into a texture strong enough to stand the strain of the daily trials and temptations of life, without tearing at some tender point. Some are gossamer fabrics that part at a touch; some shoddy, that give way utterly at the first strain. Some are fine linen fair and white, and for many purposes will wear long and well—but use it for pouting linen, and frays and cracks will soon prove its weakness. Such are those who endure prosperity well; but when the blessings go and the trials come—when the real *wear* of life begins, the strain proves too much.

A few, God bless them, "wear like tow." They do good, strong, honest service. No purple-and-fine-linen characters are they. They bear the heat and burden of the day; they tread the rough places of life unshrinkingly, fearing not its dust and toil. Alas! that even these grow tender at last.

All, sooner or later—sooner in most instances—show the wear and tear, and come to darning and patching.

THE nerve which never relaxes, the eye which never blanches, the thought which never wanders—these are the masters of victory.

BY THE SEASHORE.

BY S. WADDINGTON.

I sit on the sands by the sea,
While the tired tides wearily flow,
And the waves seem to whisper to me
Strange truths that I know not, or know:
The lore of past ages they bring,
As they break on the shore at my feet,
And the finite and infinite meet
In the words of the song that they sing:
If the universe be but One,
And the bloom be one with the tree,
Though the day that has been is done,
The thing that has been shall be.

I gaze o'er the watery plain,
Till the heavens drop down to the sea,
And I cry as I gaze thus in vain
At what is not, but seemeth to be:
Ah, local and limited man!
Ever longing to travel through space,
Yet fastened and fixed in one place,
Running forward the length of a span.
Though each part with the whole be one,
Yet men must patiently wait;
Though the day that has been is done,
They must labor both early and late.

Still in vain do we struggle to pass
The horizon that limits our sight:
But darkly to-day through a glass
We see, and soon cometh the night:
And what in the future shall be,
And what in the past may have been,
Ere the sun and the sunlight were seen,
Lie far on the infinite sea:
While the whispering waves sing on:
If the bloom be one with the tree,
Though the day that has been is done,
The thing that has been shall be.

RUTH.

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

I.

"You will not forget me, Donald?" she said, with her hand upon his arm, and her sorrowfully earnest eyes upon his fair, false face.

"Forget you?" he said, lightly. "Of course not. What makes you think so, Ruth?"

"There are so many things in the world to make you forget," she answered. "It is a bright, beautiful world, I have heard, and there are fairer faces in it than mine are. But you have promised to come back to me, Donald, and I shall expect you. I shall look for you every day till you come. Will it be long, Donald?"

"I can't tell just how long it will be," he answered. "But I must go, Ruth; I hear the stage coming down the hill, and if I linger here I shall miss it. Good-bye, Ruth," and the man with the false face and falser heart bent down and kissed her lightly on her lips.

"Oh, Donald," she cried, clinging to him as if she would keep him from leaving her, "I shall look for you till you come. You have promised to come back for me soon. Every day will seem an age till I see your face again. Don't forget, Donald."

"I shall not forget," he answered, with some vexation in his face. "I *must* go now, Ruth. Take care of yourself, and good-bye."

He shook off her clasp, and went down the road, leaving her there beside the gate, watching him. He looked back once as the stage climbed the hill. She was standing there yet, and waved her hand to him.

"*There!*" he said, settling back in the seat, and drawing a long breath of relief, "I'm rid of her at last. I wonder how long she will wait before she sees me back again?"

And then this man—if *man* he could be called—who had won the heart of a woman who was trustful as a child, and as little used to the ways of the world, and the men and women in it, laughed softly to himself, and fell to thinking of the woman who was waiting for him in the busy town far off beyond the hills.

And Ruth went back to wait his coming, and dream over the lying words he had whispered in her ear, in the summer gone away.

II.

In the moonlight a woman stood beside the gate, with a white and woeful face. It was the face of a woman from whom hope had fled away, leaving behind the ashes of a sorrow whose fire had scorched her heart in its fierce intensity.

"He is false! false! false!" she said, and her voice sounded far off, even to herself, like the voice of some other person speaking in her ear. "Yet he told me he loved me, and would come back, and I believed him. I wish I were dead!"

She reached out her hands towards the hills mutely, as if imploring help. But the hills and all the world were dumb. They could not help her in her sorrow.

"I will go to him and plead with him for mercy," she cried, "and if he will not listen, *I will die.*"

And by and by, in the quiet, peaceful night, a woman stole softly down the road, and walked away toward the city beyond the hills where *he* was whom she had trusted.

When the old man and his wife, who had been father and mother to Ruth, the only grandchild left them in their old age, called her next morning, there was no answer.

"She has gone," the old grandmother said when she came down from a visit to her room. "She has gone, Joseph, and she never will come back again, because she has gone to ask for mercy from one who will have no pity for her." And she put in his trembling hands the letter Ruth had left behind her, telling her sad story.

"My poor little Ruth," the old man cried, "I am going to find her and bring her back."

"Let me go with you to find our Ruth," his wife said, putting her hand in his. "I cannot wait here while you are gone."

And so the old couple, whose lives had been spent inside the hills that circled the horizon in, went out into the world they knew so little of, to find the wanderer who had gone to ask for mercy.

III.

Donald Keith was strolling up and down the street in an idle way. He had the appearance of a man satisfied with himself and the world. What need had he to trouble himself over the sins of the world? It used him well enough.

A woman made her way through the crowd and came towards him.

"Donald," she cried, "Donald!" and stretched out her hands towards him in an imploring way, as one might who sues for life.

"Ruth!" he cried with lowering brows. "Why have you came here? What do you want?"

"I want you to save me!" she cried. "Oh, Donald, you remember what you promised. For God's sake, don't turn me off! Have pity on me, Donald!"

"Come with me where we can talk without making a spectacle of ourselves," he cried, drawing her after him. She followed silently, trying to hope that he might listen to her plea. But there was little to encourage her in his face.

"Now go on with what you came to say," he said, when they were alone.

"Oh, Donald," she cried, throwing herself at his feet. "You know what I came for. You told me you loved me. If you ever did, for God's sake, for my sake, for your own soul's sake, be true to your promise."

"I will give you money, if that will satisfy you," he said, coldly.

"Money!" she cried, with pallid lips. "Will money save my soul from shame? Oh, Donald, are you pitiless?"

"If you will not be satisfied with money, I can do nothing for you," he answered, coldly. "Here," and he put a roll of notes into her hand, "take that and go away. Don't trouble me again."

She threw the money on the floor with a gesture of infinite despair.

"I can't live so!" she moaned. "I wish I could die. Oh, Donald, God will punish you for your sin. *Can't* you pity me?"

Such a wild, sorrowful face as it was that she lifted to his! The despair of a lost soul looked out of it. It would have melted most hearts to pity; but Donald Keith's heart was ice.

"I am tired of this," he said. "I wish you would go."

She got up and groped her way toward the door like one stricken with sudden blindness.

"God forgive you, Donald," she said, as she paused on the threshold; "God forgive you and pity me," and then she went out, feebly, and with slow steps, as if age had come upon her suddenly.

IV.

A woman with a sweet, pure face was pacing up and down the crimson of a sumptuous parlor's carpet. Wealth had made the place like fairyland. There were pictures on the walls that were like bits of life that some magician's hand had caught and framed. Flowers made the air sweet with summer scents.

"Why doesn't Donald come?" she said, going to the window and looking out through a cloud of lace. "Dear Donald," and the sweet face softened at the name.

A servant came to the door.

"There's a man and woman down stairs who want to see you," he said. "They won't be put off."

"Nobody has been told to put them off," she answered. "Bring them in, William."

She looked up in some surprise when Grandfather Moore and his wife came in. The old man's face was very stern and set, but his wife was weeping behind her old brown veil.

"Are you Katherine Earle?" the old man asked, "the woman Donald Keith is going to marry."

A soft glow came into her face that was not from the fire as she answered yes.

"I'm sorry for you," he said, "very sorry, for you've got a good face. But it's better to tell you the truth. Oh, woman, he's a murderer. There's blood on his soul."

She caught at a chair, white as the dead are.

"What do you mean?" she cried.

"Let me tell her," the old man's wife said. "Maybe I can tell it so it will hurt her less than if you told it," and through her weeping, Ruth's grandmother told the sorrowful story of man's faithlessness and sin, and girlish trustfulness and ruin.

"And we found her in the place where they put the dead bodies they take out of the river," the old man said, when the story was done. "He killed our Ruth as much as if he had stabbed her to the heart with a knife. God will punish him."

Katherine Earle sat down with a deathly paleness in her face. How could she doubt the story of this old couple? She could not. Every word carried a conviction of truth with it. But she had loved Donald Keith so!

The door opened and he came in. He turned pale as she was when he saw who was there.

"He has come to answer for himself," Grandfather Moore cried. "Ask him if the story I have told you is true, and then tell him to go to the dead-house and look at his work!"

"Oh, Donald Keith!" she cried, putting out her hands to keep him away from her, "don't touch me. Don't speak to me. Your face is full of guilt. I wonder you dare to come here with a lie upon your lips and such a stain upon your soul. The poor girl down yonder in the Morgue is pure as snow compared with you. And you have told me you loved me, and I believed the lying lips that lured her on to her ruin."

"I do love you," he cried. "I told you the truth, Katherine, as God hears me." And looking in his face she could not doubt him; for I believe that a man can be a villain and still be capable of loving a woman as Donald Keith loved her. "Oh, Katherine, let me tell you everything."

"*They* have told me," she said, simply. "Don't try to hide your guilt—it is so black that nothing but God's mercy can wash it out, or cover it from sight. I pity you from the bottom of my heart, as I would pity any one who has the load to bear that is upon your soul. I shudder when I think how near I came to linking my fate with yours. When I remember your touches—your kisses on my lips—it seems as if there must be a stain there that I want to wash away. Go, kneel by the woman who sought her death in the river, that had more pity for her than you had, and ask her to forgive you."

He turned without a word and went away. Punishment for his sin had come to him, swift and terrible. The face of the woman in the Morgue looked at him out of the dark corners of the hall as he left the house, and a voice seemed calling to him in stern and pitiless accents to think of the time when he should stand face to face with the woman who had asked mercy vainly at his hands. Who would ask for mercy then? And would the plea be answered as he had answered Ruth's? God knows.

IT is a mistake to imagine that only the violent passions, such as ambition and love, can triumph over the rest. Idleness, languid as she is, often masters them all; she indeed influences all our designs and actions, and insensibly consumes and destroys both passions and virtues.

GOODNESS of heart is man's best treasure, his brightest honor, and noblest acquisition. It is that ray of the Divinity which dignifies humanity.

ESTHER EARLE'S EXPERIMENT.

BY MAURICE EGAN.

There is a woman in black who passes down the street nearly every morning, a pale, thin woman, with a troubled, anxious face. Her dress and shawl are rusty and threadbare, but she has about her no lack of neatness, no trace of slovenliness. Sometimes she leads a little boy by the hand—a little boy, who, though not as ruddy as the other little boys in our street, is all dimples and wondering smiles, for it is evident that he does not get out often, and the fresh air and sunshine are to him wonderful new things full of pleasant mystery. His mother does not seem to know any of the neighbors. I saw her smile only once, and that smile was a revelation. It brought back to her face all the girlish beauty of long ago; then the smile faded, and the woman was again the pale, worn Esther Earle; no longer the gleeful, buoyant Esther Lee I had known five years ago.

It was Bessie Evergreen who had caused the smile. Bessie, who prides herself on her housekeeping, was coming from market, with chickens' feet and spikes of celery protruding from her basket in the most approved way, when Esther Earle and little Edwin came along. Bessie looked laughingly down at the boy, and the boy looked shyly up at Bessie. And then Bessie searched in her basket for the largest red cheeked apple, and thrust it into the boy's unreluctant hand.

It was a very little thing—a very little thing; but it brightened little Edwin's day, and gave his mother new strength, for it made her think that the world was not all as harsh and bitter and scornful as she had learned to believe.

I think she sews for some clothing establishment, for, when she passes, she usually carries on her arm a coat or vest. The other day, as a policeman was rather roughly dragging along an intoxicated and rather unmanageable man, I saw Esther hastily drop her work on a door-step and run across the street. To the policeman's amazement she wiped the drunkard's cut face with her handkerchief, replaced his battered hat, and loosened the cravat that threatened to cause apoplexy.

"It might have been him! It might have been him!" she murmured, as she resumed her work and went her way.

* * * * *

In the summer of 1860, Esther and her uncle, John Lee, were domiciled at Cape May for the season. John Lee was very wealthy; he was the proprietor of a dozen productive farms in Chester county, and, besides this, petroleum had been lately "struck" on a scrubby lot of his up near Wellsboro.

John Lee was a plain-speaking, farmer-like man, with "no nonsense about him." He had a fair amount of common sense, and an undoubted talent for agricultural operations. Esther was an orphan, and his only living relative. He loved her in his matter-of-fact way, which, nevertheless, was a true and lasting way. He was not in the habit of frequenting fashionable resorts; he hated "airs" and fashion; but this year his purse was more plethoric than usual; he felt that Esther would be the better for a change of air and a glimpse of a new mode of life. Besides, he had another reason which he hardly acknowledged even to himself. He was growing old, and Esther was on the verge of womanhood. It was time, he thought, that she should have stronger and more secure protection than he could give her. Being his heiress, she must marry money, and among the crowds at Cape May she would probably meet more "likely young fellows" than at home, in the secluded farmhouse, at Chester. Thus, half unconsciously, short-sighted John Lee argued.

Esther had natural good taste and a *carte blanche* for her expenditure, two things to be envied. Her face was pretty—very like the face of Guido's Beatrice Cenci, but without the expression which makes that face beautiful—her eyes and lips were smiling and saucy, and she was as graceful as a kitten. This was John Lee's simile as he saw her, in white, with coquettish knots and ends of cherry-colored ribbon, driving her little pony carriage along the beach.

The driving of that pony carriage, which, in 1860, some ladies called "fast"—though, indeed, the pony was one of the slowest of his species—brought Esther to grief, for one morning, after a storm had thrown up hillocks of sand on the beach, her little chariot capsized on the very verge of the ocean. The pony came to a standstill, and Esther was gently tossed into the paternal embrace of a white-bearded wave!

One of the numerous young men who generally happened to be on the beach when she took her drive instantly rushed forward, and helped her to regain her feet. The wave had rolled out with her wide-brimmed hat and its ribbons of cerise, but Esther looked very lovely with her hair powdered with salty pearls, and the half-frightened, half-laughing expression in her brown eyes.

"The prettiest girl in the world—by Jove!" thought Edwin Earle, as she thanked him.

For her part, she instantly made a hero of the tall, handsome man who stood before her, and when he had returned from the nearest hotel with a borrowed shawl, she allowed him to drive her home.

"He won't do," cogitated John Lee; "he's only a bookkeeper off on a holiday. I don't object to that, though, but that deep flush on his cheek comes from brandy, not health. I know all about him; he is always hanging around the bar, and he was more than "half-seas over" the other night. But," and John refilled his pipe, "I can trust Esther. She's not a fool. I'll not interfere until I see some cause."

Short-sighted, easy-going John Lee!

Weeks passed. Hops, sailing parties, drives, pleasant readings indoors on rainy days, made a bright dream for Esther, for Edwin Earle usually was near her.

"Uncle," said Esther, as on one of the last "hop nights" she went out in the twilight on the deserted piazza, and stood before him, a lovely picture, framed in soft lace and rustling silk—"uncle, I have promised to be Edwin Earle's wife."

"What!" cried John Lee, as if thunderstruck.

"Yes," she answered, blushing; "he asked me to-day, and—and he will come to see you to-night."

John Lee groaned.

"Are you crazy, Esther? In a few years that man will be a confirmed dr—in fact, he is very intemperate."

"I know it, Uncle John," she said, gravely; "but he loves me. He will let nothing stand between him and me. He will become temperate for my sake."

"You are leaning on a broken reed, Esther, if you trust to that. At best, it is but a great risk—too great a risk for you to run. I do not believe in these sudden reformations. Can't you wait, and try him a year or two? No? Well, you are of age; I cannot legally control you. But think! you are about to try a terribly dangerous experiment."

"I have no fear of its result, uncle; love works wonders."

"Love!" John Lee paused, and then waxed angry. "Give me good principles, and mutual esteem, and—— What is the use of talking? Look here, Esther Lee, if you marry that man, you shall never call a cent of my money yours! You know I never break my word."

"I will marry him," she said, proudly.

John Lee saw that his last speech was a false move, but he could not remedy it now.

Esther Lee became Esther Earle. For several months Edwin Earle made some efforts to keep the promise of amendment, but by degrees he grew more reckless. After a time the firm which employed him was forced to dispense with his services. He had become worse than useless. Poverty and shame were Esther Earle's marriage portion.

Esther worked patiently and lovingly, never losing hope. Through dreary days and nights she ministered to this man, who managed to obtain the liquid madness in spite of all her efforts, who passed from drunken stupor into cruel bursts of fury. Uncle John never wrote to her, and she never wrote to him. She had refused his advice, and chosen her own lot. She would suffer in silence. God had not forsaken her, she had her child.

* * * * *

A funeral procession has just passed the window. Three days ago Edwin Earle died of delirium tremens. His wife, in her threadbare black, and the little boy, are the only mourners. I catch a glimpse of her face. She seems ten years older, and by that look of frozen anguish you can tell that she mourns him as deeply as if he had been the truest of husbands and the best of men.

I hear that John Lee has offered to take her home, and make the little boy his heir. May she find rest and peace, for if her experiment failed, it failed not for want of a woman's boundless faith and love!

"ONE TOUCH OF NATURE."

BY REV. DR. BADGER.

"What are you laughing at?"

Seyton Outerfell, to call upon whom as a new neighbor Doctor Gayland had walked over from his country seat, accompanied by the readers' humble servant, the religious editor and the poet, rose from his chair in a shady corner of his piazza, and welcomed his guests cordially. For this we will say for him: no one can be more cordial than Seyton, when he sees that cordiality will "pay." He had been laughing over a book and a newspaper, which he seemed to be reading simultaneously, and in which, though he is commonly pretty watchful, he had been so deeply immersed that he had not heeded our approach across his lawn till the doctor's question startled him.

"I was laughing," said he, "to think, in reading about this affair of the Black Hills, and refreshing my recollections of the Bastile, in how many different forms the old Adam crops out, and how that ancient principle holds its own in humanity. He is like *Ironbrace*, in 'Used Up,' shut one trapdoor on him, he pokes his head up from another."

As we were all too busy, after our warm walk, with our cool goblets of iced raspberry vinegar to reply, our entertainer went on.

"Let the motive be but strong enough, and the proposed course but safe enough, the republicans of the nineteenth century will show their kinship to the tyrants of the fifteenth. You can't deny it. Just as you are expressing your thankfulness that you are not like those poor benighted monarchies over the water, you betray yourselves, closely showing some popular greed, as of gold, that turns your fine philanthropy inside out. Sweet 'touch of nature,'" cried he, laughing, "that makes the whole world kin again!"

The poet looked pained; the editor, who is used to war upon hypocrisy, nodded; Doctor Gayland, who, besides being one of those patriots who believe that whatever is is, and also ought to be, and who besides has too broad a ground plan for his elevation, began to grow alarmingly red in the face.

"Deep down in the souls of men," continued Seyton, with his Mephistopheles sneer, "lies the instinct of despotism, the germs whence sprung your Bridge of Sighs, your *oubliettes* of Venice and Avignon, your Traitors' Tower of London, your fires of Smithfield and Salem, your guillotine, your Black Hole of Calcutta, and, as the embodiment in stone of their creative principle, your Bastile."

The poet was regarding Seyton with a puzzled look, of which we readily guessed the cause. That mysterious young man—if he is a young man, and not a "materialization"—was talking, as he usually does when expressing his own ideas, as if he were in the world, but not of it, a mere looker-on in the Vienna of human life. We fully expected that he would exhibit another of his mannerisms presently, and still further puzzle the poet. He did.

"Ha!" cried he, "I remember as if it were yesterday, when poor little Jean and Louis D'Armagnac were brought up for punishment."

"Reminiscence of fagging," whispered the poet to the editor, who, being, like ourself, better acquainted with Outerfell, smiled.

"Their father," Seyton went on, "had—ha! ha!—had tried to soften the heart"—he stopped for twenty seconds to laugh softly to himself, and then, with a suddenness that made the poet start, exclaimed, "of Louis the Eleventh!"

"And that seems to him but yesterday," murmured the poet, again subsiding into tranquility.

"Of course," we whispered, reassuringly. "Profound scholar—deeply read historian—everything real to him, you know."

"Oh!" said the poet, but he continued to look doubtfully at Seyton nevertheless.

"Yes," pursued Outerfell, "the poor Duke de Nemours had humbled himself, and begged for mercy for his innocent children. He so prevailed with the king that—ha! ha!—twice a week his boys were stripped and scourged; once a month seized after the scourging and held, while from the mouth of each a tooth was wrenched, and then thrust back into cells so small that they could neither stand nor lie down, and there starve for days together. I see Jean dying a raving maniac, and Louis living through it all till the king dies and so frees him."

We glanced at each other. Could we rise and take our leave? Not politely, for we were evidently expected to attend to more reminiscences. The editor folded his arms, drew down the corners of his mouth, rolled up his eyes, and shrugged his shoulders.

"I see," pursued, or rather persisted, the historian, "the Admiral Chabot, whom Francis I, in consequence of a dispute about the royal prerogative, has consigned to the Bastile, a ruined man, called back to Court and informed, with smiles, that all was but a royal jest. He is pale, emaciated, death-struck. He replies: 'A dreadful jest, sire! You have wounded my very heart.' Then he goes home and lies down to die. Look there," continued the speaker, startling us all as he pointed at a cellar window, which immediately showed us what he described. "Underground, and deeper than the castle ditch that overflows into it, is the cell where De Rosieres, archdeacon of Toul, for personally displeasing Henry III, by disapproving his debaucheries, is left to find his only refuge from drowning on a stone in the midst of the water, shared with him by the rats, that made him their living prey. In such a cell the eloquent preacher Poncet, in the same reign, so nearly perished that he lived but one day after being taken out, and to the same, or one just like it, Madame D'Ancre was consigned by Louis XIII, previously to being beheaded beside the flames that were to burn her to ashes, simply because the king so hated her husband that he had had him murdered."

"I hope," said Dr. Gayland, "we have heard the worst."

"I recollect," Seyton answered, musingly, "when Richelieu put De Jars, whom he hated, into a den five feet high by four square, with no light, with no air but what came in under the iron door, and with a floor of filth, into which the foot sank to the instep, and after leaving him there eleven months, took him out to torture him with alternate hope of life and dread of death, only desisting when he found the man insensible to all that his malignant cruelty could inflict. I recollect seeing D'Achon leave, as an old, white-haired man, the Bastile which he had entered as a beardless boy, but seven years before, the work of a lifetime having been wrought meanwhile by cruelty and horror. I remember how poor young Selden used to suffer during the two and thirty years of his close incarceration, ostensibly for a boyish offence, but really that his teachers might coax him to sign away his property to get free, and swear not to tell how they had treated him in prison. Then, guilty of no crime, there was D'Avoisotte, who lived in the Bastile forty years without a hearing, and begging then—poor, caged creature, to be returned to it as the only home he knew, was mercifully allowed to linger out the rest of his fifty-four years, six months and twenty days of life in captivity. There was the masked prisoner, murdered in his dungeon. There was," said Seyton, interrupting himself, "only one jest better than that of the mask, perpetrated while the Bastile stood, and that was the quaint fancy of putting into Cardel's perfectly dark dungeon a raving maniac, against whom, night and day, for five mortal weeks, the man—he was innocent, too, that was the fun of it—had to defend his life. But," continued Outerfell, warming up with enthusiasm, "the merry time was after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, when the widow of Scarron, and his friends, was queen *sub rosa*. That was the Elizabethan era of the Bastile. Afterwards there was little comparatively to interest me except the thirty-five years of Latude's penance for a trick on that noble creature, the Pompadour. But she was a good woman beside the Scarron widow, who filled every hole and corner, 'the cradle,' 'paradise,' the 'well,' the 'chains,' the 'slaughter house,' the 'forgotten cells,' and the 'grave,' as they were called, with prisoners of all ages and sexes, martyrs for their faith, some of whose skeletons were found afterwards chained by the waist and neck to the walls, just as they had died."

"But," said Dr. Gayland, "such horrors are over forever. The despotism of kings——"

"Eh! my dear sir," cried Seyton, "what matters it to the oppressed whether they are deprived of lands and life by one man or by a nation of men? And how many more horrors, think you, were enacted under the vaults of the Bastile than would be enacted under the blue canopy of heaven, in the war so kindly offered as an alternative to the Sioux, should they determine to cling to and defend their property? No, no, Doctor Gayland. Let the motive be but strong enough, the contemplated course safe enough, down goes the mask, and the Indian beholds an oppressor where the African saw a philanthropist."

The doctor, who had fidgeted in his chair during the whole of this speech, jumped up at its conclusion and took his leave, like a man in a hurry. The rest of us followed his example, Outerfell parting with us most politely; for this we will say for him, nobody can be more polite than Seyton, when he chooses to be.

"How do you like your new neighbor, Doctor?" we asked, on the way home.

"If that man," said Doctor Gayland, with a clenched fist for emphasis, "keeps that country seat another season, I—I declare I'll move to Manayunk."

THE OLD AND THE NEW LOVE.—It is a common saying that the members of the same family should often separate that they may the better love each other when they come together. Now, to us, this seems one of those modern doctrines born of the restlessness and unquiet of the times. In "old times" people did not need to take long journeys to keep their love fresh and green. Fathers and mothers lived together for long years without desiring to leave each other; brothers and sisters dreaded nothing so much as breaking up the old homestead. No; if there is not that true love in the heart which can forgive and excuse little defects of character in those we love, it will never be engrafted by frequent separations.

LITTLE RUBY.

BY F. S. MILLS.

There was once a little girl named Ruby, who lived in the days of the fairies, and who had a fairy godmother; and one day this fairy godmother came to see her and brought her knitting, and while she was making her little golden needles twinkle like sunbeams, she said to Ruby: "Ruby, I hope you will be dressed by sunrise to-morrow morning, for if you are not, you will miss something very nice."

"And what is that?" asked Ruby.

"The fairy queen and all her Court are going to ride past your house to-morrow morning; and if you are quite ready the fairy queen has promised me to take you with her; but you must be quite sure, and not be idle in dressing, as you generally do, for even if you have only your bonnet-strings to tie, the queen will not wait for you a second."

"Oh! it will be easy enough to be ready in time," said Ruby.

And so it was, but not for Ruby; for she was a little girl that had a very bad habit of lounging and waiting, and staring about her when she should be busy; so, though she was very anxious for the ride with the fairy queen, she thought, as there was plenty of time, it would do no harm to jump up and down on the floor, when she first got out of bed, because it is so funny to jump with bare feet; and when at last she sat down to pull on her stockings—

"Taran, taran, tara!" she heard outside of the window, the sweetest, clearest, and most silvery notes that were ever blown out of a trumpet.

Away she flew to the window, and there was a famous sight, though it passed so quickly that she hardly got there in time to see. First, a splendid band of frogs in speckled coats; and behind them marched a splendid company of robin-redbreasts, who were the queen's soldiers, each strutting in a red-coat, with a sword dangling by his side. And behind rode the queen and her maids on little ponies not much larger than a kitten two weeks old; and these ponies were black and had silver harness. The queen was dressed in green and purple, and so were all her maids. Behind rolled the carriages of the fat old fairies, made out of walnut-shells and lined with rose-leaves; and behind all this a little carriage just large enough to hold Ruby, with the top thrown back, and red velvet cushions, drawn by two ponies about as large as two small Newfoundland dogs.

"And this carriage," said the fairy queen aloud, as they passed, "was for Ruby; but she is not ready, and we can not wait."

So they all passed by like a flash, and there stood Ruby, staring. When her fairy godmother came again, she asked if the queen would not call for her once more, promising this time to be quite ready.

"But no, my dear child," said her godmother; "fairy queens never come twice in a lifetime to little people who are not ready for them; but I will tell you of something nearly as nice. There is an old giant whom they call the Giant of Goodies. He wears a great overcoat full of pockets, and those pockets are always stuffed with all kinds of things that children like. He is always hungry at dinner-time, like other people; and when he is hungry he pops in and out from one house to another, till he finds one where the table is ready set. There he sits down, and when he goes away he always gives the children in the house whatever they want, in his pocket; but he never waits a minute either, so be sure you always have the table ready spread in time, for some of these days he will look in on you before you know of it."

Of course, for some days after that Ruby was careful to have the table ready in time, but when the giant did not come she grew tired of that, and went back to her old lounging, lazy way. So it happened one day that she was busy playing that her doll Sarah had the measles, and she had just got her into bed and tied on her nightcap, and sent for the doctor, when her mother called her down stairs to set the table. Ruby fancied that she must wait till the doctor came; and when her mother called again she felt very cross to be obliged to leave her play. Being cross, of course all things went wrong; and while she was pulling and twitching at the table-cloth, because she could not get it on straight, she heard a great thumping in the hall of a stick, and a monstrous clattering of shoes, and there stood the Giant of Goodies at the door.

"Not ready yet," cried the giant, "what a lazy little girl you are! Well, I must be off,—can't wait."

And away he rushed; but oh! Ruby had seen in his pocket that great big doll with eyes that could open and shut, and curling hair, and that little cooking stove, and the book full of pictures, and ever so many more things. Crying did no good; such nice giants never come twice, any more than fairy queens. But when her godmother came again:—

"There is yet one more nice thing," said the good old fairy; "but if you lose that, I am sure I don't know what will be done with you. There is a beautiful white dove that lays wonderful eggs, and is apt to fly through the house when the mother calls. Be sure you always run quickly, Ruby, and you may catch the dove and have it for your own."

Ruby, who was quite determined not to lose this chance, was careful to jump and run the instant she heard herself called; but so many months went by that she began really to think that the dove was never coming. By this time, however, she had a habit of going quickly when called; and one day as she was running down the stairs she saw something white resting on the balusters. Hardly believing her eyes, she stretched out her hand very carefully, and seized it; but the pretty little dove did not flutter and try to get away, but nestled in her fat little hand as if it liked to be there. It was white as snow, with purple eyes and pink feet, and laid an egg every day, in which Ruby was sure to find a new book or toy, unless she had been lazy or tardy again, when there would be nothing but a little egg-shell, quite empty. Ruby called the dove "Snow," and kept it all her life, and loved it very much; and in the course of time grew to be as active a little girl as even her fairy godmother could wish.

CAST UP BY THE SEA!

By MRS. HENRY WOOD,

Author of "East Lynne," etc., etc.

CHAPTER VII.

WHAT THE SEA CASTS UP—THE FLAG HALF-MAST HIGH.

The words spoken by the servants, perhaps heedlessly, that their lady might be "catching her death," were borne out more literally than such words generally are. Whether it was the kneeling on the stone floor in the chilly night; whether it was the scantiness of the apparel she had thrown on; or the rising from the bed, hot, for that she had previously been in bed, there was no doubt, certain it is, that violent cold and inflammation attacked Lady Dane. The medical men called it pleurisy: less scientific people, inflammation of the chest: no matter for the proper term, Lady Dane was in imminent danger.

She lay in her spacious bed room, so redolent of comfort; its dire regulated that the temperature might be of a certain heat, its little luxuries ready at hand. The servants, moving softly in their list slippers, were anxious and attentive; the doctors were unremitting; the neighborhood was concerned. *Could* life have been kept in Lady Dane by earthly means, they were not lacking; but when the time comes for its departure, who may prolong its stay? Lady Dane was dying; and she knew it. An eminent physician had been summoned from town; he had paid his visit that morning, and had gone back again. A rumor spread in the servant's hall—though whence originating and how *they* could have got hold of it, they themselves would have been at a loss to tell—that the great London man had pronounced it, in confidence to Mr. Wild, a case without hope.

"I said it from the first," wailed Sophie. "I knew that when two died out of the family, the third would not be long after them."

"What's that, Mam'selle Sophie?" cried Mr. Bruff.

"What's that!" sharply retorted Sophie: "it's a well known certainty to anybody who keep their eyes open. I have remarked it hundreds of times in my own country, and I dare say you have in yours, if you'll only put your recollection to work, and cast it backwards. Let two out of the same family die, pretty near together, and you may look soon for the third interment. It's sure to come, if not directly, before the twelvemonth's up."

"Nonsense," said Bruff.

"Is it nonsense? You just look abroad and take notice, if you've never noticed it before. You can begin with this household," added Sophie, tapping her foot on the floor to give force to her argument. "The captain was the first, Mr. Dane was the second, and her ladyship will be the third. When news came that Mr. Dane was dead, I said to myself, 'Then who'll be the next?'—for it came across my brain in the same minute that another there would be. And I feared it might be my lord: I never thought of my lady."

"Perhaps there'll be a fourth!" sarcastically returned the incredulous Bruff.

"Sophie's right," put in the housekeeper; "I have observed it myself many times. When two go off quietly out of a family, a third generally follows."

"If I could lower myself to think such trash, I'd never say it," rebuked the indignant butler. "Mam'selle Sophie may be excused: she's young: but when folks have lived to your age and mine, ma'am, they might know better. It is to be hoped her ladyship will recover."

"Then if she does recover, it will be his lordship that will go," persisted the undaunted Sophie. "But I don't think she is going to recover: it is not in her face. I may not be as old as you, Mr. Bruff, by twenty good years, and I shall be thirty my next birthday; but if I were you, I'd never boast of my age, until I had used my powers of observation to more purpose. Anyway, two have gone, and the other will follow. You'll see."

Adelaide Errol sat alone with her aunt, ostensibly attending on her, should she want anything: though indeed she seemed more buried within herself and her own reflections, than thinking of Lady Dane. Since the night when she had been so terrified in the ruins, a great change had overtaken Adelaide. No longer was she the gay, careless girl of formerly: her step was languid, her spirits were unequal, her manner was subdued. In her appearance, also, there was an alteration for the worse: her brilliant color had faded to paleness, and her rounded form had grown thin. She sat in an invalid chair before the fire (her aunt's previous to Lady Dane's taking to her bed), her cheek was pressed upon her right hand, and her eyes were fixed on vacancy.

"Adelaide."

It was Lady Dane who spoke: and Adelaide sprang up with a start, abruptly aroused to outward things.

"Yes, aunt. What can I do for you?"

"Nothing just now," feebly replied Lady Dane, whose voice was scarcely audible for weakness; and had her medical attendants been present, they would have taken care she did not try to make it audible. "Why are you looking so sad, Adelaide? What were you thinking of?"

A vivid blush rose to the cheeks of Lady Adelaide.

"It is a sad time," she answered.

And the plea was too true a one for Lady Dane to suspect its evasion.

"This strange sadness—I call it strange, Adelaide, in you—has continued since the death of Harry," pursued Lady Dane. "Is it caused by his death?"

A blush as vivid as the previous one, but more painful. Lady Adelaide, however, remained silent.

"Child, I shall not long be here, and I would ask——"

"Oh, aunt!" interrupted Adelaide, in a tone of pain.

"Not long," calmly repeated Lady Dane; "a few days, perhaps but a few hours. Do not distress yourself. It causes me no distress; quite the contrary; I am glad to go. I have, I humbly hope, a Friend in heaven, and he will welcome me to his Father's home. Oh, Adelaide! the world has become sad to me; I shall be *glad* to go."

Tears were raining from the eyes of Lady Adelaide. There was a pause, and then the invalid resumed:

"But I want now to speak of yourself, whilst I have power left for it. This unaccountable sadness, whence does it proceed? I do *not* think it is caused by grief for Harry's death."

"It—it—was a dreadful death," shivered Adelaide, shunning the question.

Miss Bordillion looked up, astonished at her abrupt entrance, her words, her manner altogether. Tiffle was literally panting with passion.

Lady Dane clasped her hands together.

"Ay, a dreadful death! a dreadful death! Still, not one to have made this lasting impression upon you; for, Adelaide, I suspect you did not love him."

"We all loved him," Adelaide was beginning; but Lady Dane arrested her words.

"Child, I am dying. If there must needs still be concealment between us in these my last hours, at least let there not be equivocation. I believed that you did not care for Harry; I believe that you loved, and do still love Herbert—Geoffry, as we must call him now. Though I cannot quite remember to say Geoffry so soon," added Lady Dane, sadly; "it puts me too much in mind of my own Geoffry who is gone."

Adelaide burst into fresh tears.

"Tell me the truth, child. Why should you conceal it now? Herbert was no match for you then; Harry was, and he idolized you; but things have changed. Herbert will succeed his uncle, and there can be no barrier to your union with him. But I should like to be satisfied how it will be before I go. Speak the truth, Adelaide."

Adelaide Errol was visibly agitated as she bent over her aunt, for the latter had taken her hands and was drawing her closer. Speak she must; there was no escape; but even Lady Dane, dying as she was, observed how violently her heart beat.

"Aunt, I do not wish to marry Herbert Dane."

"What!" uttered Lady Dane, in her astonishment.

"I will not marry him. I—do not"—she spoke here with remarkable hesitation—"like him well enough."

Lady Dane regarded her searchingly. A suspicion came over her that Adelaide imperfectly understood, not the present conversation, but the future position of Herbert; for that Adelaide had long been wrapt up in Herbert, was her settled conviction.

"Child, are you mistaking his circumstances, his future? He will be Lord Dane."

"If he were to be king of England, I would not marry him," vehemently spoke Lady Adelaide.

"Then—is it possible—did you really love Harry?" was the slow, doubting response.

Another flow of tears, and a softened answer.

"Aunt, if Harry could rise from the dead I would be glad to marry him; I would rather marry him than any one else in the world."

"How I have been mistaken!" uttered Lady Dane.

And Adelaide hid her face amid the bedclothes as she listened.

Lady Dane thought her manner appeared very singular, and a doubt crossed her mind whether there was not some mystery yet to fathom.

Whether or not, it was not fated that Lady Dane should unravel it. During their conversation an unusual stir and noise had been gradually arising in the road, and now penetrating to the inside of the castle. Unnoticed at first, the commotion was now so great as to attract the attention, if not the alarm of Lady Dane. Tumult like that within the well-conducted castle!

"Adelaide, go you and see what it can be. Bring me word."

Away went Adelaide, thankful, if the truth were known, to be dismissed from that bedside. A dozen fishermen or so were congregated in the hall, having carried in a burden covered up on a sort of hand-barrow. The servants were surrounding them; Lord Dane was present in his chair; stragglers, attracted by the news, made bold to push into the castle. Altogether it was a scene of confusion. Questions were poured on the fishermen, and they were all answering at once in their loud voices and rude patois.

Adelaide gathered in the sense of their words. What motive impelled her to act as she was doing, none could tell; probably she herself could not have told, possibly in that moment of terror she was unconscious of her actions. A moment of unspeakable terror it evidently was to her; her lips were blanched and drawn back from her teeth, her features wore the hue of the grave; she glided amidst the crowd, laid her hand upon the barrow, and was lifting up its covering.

A fisherman darted forward, and unceremoniously pulled her back.

"It's no sight for her," he said, turning to Lord Dane; "it's no sight for women, young or old; ye may judge, my lord, that it is not."

Then, for the first time, Lord Dane observed that Adelaide was present.

"Go away," he said to her, sadly but imperatively. "What brought you here?"

"Ye'd never get it out o' your sight, young madam, all yer life a'ter," spoke up another man who had advanced to keep guard of the barrow; "and it's stark naked beside."

"Leave the hall, Adelaide! Are you mad?" sternly reiterated Lord Dane.

The flushing crimson had come to her cheeks now, and the perspiration broke out on her brow, as she hurriedly obeyed.

"I think I must have been mad," she repeated to herself. "What possessed me?"

Mechanically, scarcely conscious of what she was about, she re-entered the chamber of Lady Dane. The latter had contrived to struggle into a sitting posture in bed, and her eyes eagerly turned upon Adelaide their questioning light.

"What is it? what is it?" she uttered, for the young lady made no response to the mute questioning.

"I—I do not know, aunt."

"What is it?" repeated Lady Dane. "You do know; I see it in your countenance."

"They said I was not to tell you," replied Adelaide—the most senseless rejoinder she could have made, proving how uncollected was her mind.

"Instinct has told me," said Lady Dane, with a gasping sob. "They have found and brought home the body of Harry."

"It is so, aunt," acknowledged Adelaide.

"But—at this distance of time—so long in the water—how can they recognize it?"

"I gathered in the purport of what they were saying, aunt," returned Adelaide, evidently speaking with a painful effort; "that it was all but unrecognizable; that they knew it by the teeth and a mark on the arm. Ravensbird, who came in with them, says he could swear to it by the mark; and they were saying that it could not have been all this time in the water."

"Ravensbird! And Lord Dane suffered *him* to enter?"

"There is great confusion, aunt. Perhaps he may have been unnoticed, until he spoke."

The body had been found a few miles farther off by the fishermen, and they brought it to Danesheld in their boat, never giving a thought to its being that of Captain Dane. But—as fate had it—when they reached the shore, Ravensbird happened to be strolling about there. He immediately pronounced it to be the body of his late master, knowing it, as Adelaide had said, by the teeth and the mark on the arm; and it was borne to the castle.

An inquest was held upon it, and the verdict returned was, "Wilful murder against some person or persons unknown." A rumor went about the place, and obtained credence, that had it not been for the episode, related by Drake, of the man with the pack, it might have been "Wilful murder against Richard Ravensbird," in spite of the testified alibi.

The body was buried in the Dane vault, and people mourned more truly for the Honorable William Henry Dane than they had done for the heir, the Honorable Geoffry. But, the very day of interment, another died, to be mourned for—Lady Dane. It seemed that the flag was forever floating half-mast high now, over the castle.

All these events, following one upon another with succession so rapid, told upon the shattered frame, the broken health of Lord Dane. He was unable now to quit his chamber; and very soon, it was thought, he would be unable to quit his bed. Herbert Dane—Geoffry Dane, as he was henceforth to be called—once again, and for the third time, had to perform the office of chief mourner; and on his return from the funeral he was summoned to the presence of the old lord.

He left his hat with its sweeping band in the library, and proceeded to attend the summons. He could not avoid remarking as he went in, how strangely altered and ill Lord Dane looked.

"Are you worse, uncle?" he involuntarily asked. "Don't you feel well?"

"I do not know that I am much worse, Geoffry, but as to feeling well, that I shall never do again. I may be called away at any moment, and it is necessary that I should 'set my house in order.' For this purpose—I should be more correct in saying, in pursuance of this purpose—I have caused you to come to me. According to the arbitrary decrees of fate—how capricious, how unlooked-for they are!—you will be the seventeenth Baron Dane. Geoffry, I have a charge to leave you, as such—a charge above all other charges."

"I will fulfill it, sir, if it be in my power."

The old peer stretched out his hand from his easy chair, in which he was propped, and laid it upon the wrist of his nephew, slowly and impressively. Geoffry bent a little nearer to the anxious face.

"I charge you, by all your hopes of happiness, that you never cease in striving to bring to light the destroyer of Harry," solemnly said Lord Dane. "Spare no means, no energies, no trouble; let not idleness overtake you in your task; be not tempted by want of success to relinquish it. Should the years go on, ay, until you are an old man, and nothing have turned up, still do not flag; a conviction is upon me that search will not always be in vain. You hear me, Geoffry?"

"Yes, I hear."

"Let your suspicions, your secret watchings, be directed to one quarter in particular; for, that the guilt lies in it, there is no doubt. Never let your surveillance be off that man."

"Of whom do you speak, sir?" inquired Geoffry, in a tone of surprise.

"Ravensbird. Of whom else do you suppose I speak? Why do you knit your brow? why do you look displeased—incredulous?"

"Pardon me, sir, I do not agree with you; though, if I did knit my brow, it was with perplexity, not displeasure. I cannot get over the fact that the absence of Ravensbird from the heights at the time of the occurrence has been credibly testified to; and it is a physical impossibility for a man to be in two places at once. Neither can I keep my suspicions from dwelling on that other, that packman."

"Pshaw!" returned Lord Dane, impatiently, shaking his head. "I have never attached credit to that tale of the packman. I do not say it did not take place, the encounter, dispute—whatever it may have been—as Drake describes it; but as to that fellow's having attacked Harry to death, the notion is absurd. Some traveling bagman, passing accidentally, who importuned Harry to purchase a cotton pocket-handkerchief, or a horn-knife to cut bread and cheese, and Harry rode the high horse at being accosted, and drove the fellow away. It was nothing more, rely upon it. No; whoever dealt out his death to Harry, that night, had a motive in it. It was Ravensbird; I tell you it was Ravensbird, Geoffry, and I charge you look to him."

Lord Dane ceased. He appeared to have done with the subject, and a long pause ensued, each appearing buried in his own reflections.

At length he put an end to the interview, and Geoffry proceeded to the drawing-room, where sat Adelaide. Very sad, very lonely did she look there in her mourning robes, the only inmate of the castle save its invalid master. She rose from her seat to leave the room as Geoffry entered.

"Adelaide, am I scaring you away?"

"Oh, no," she answered, with a confused blush, and down she sat again.

"I hope you are better than you have been of late," he continued. "You have allowed me to see so little of you that we seem like strangers."

"I have not been very well, and I have been much occupied with my poor aunt."

"I hear it is in contemplation that you should return to Scotland."

"I believe it is."

"But it is most strange that you should do so," he impulsively rejoined. "You may as well bury yourself alive as become an inmate of Mrs. Grant's undesirable home."

A change passed over her face, and but for a strong effort the tears would have rained from her eyes. Purgatory itself would have scarcely seemed more terrible in prospective to Lady Adelaide than did Mrs. Grant's house.

"Adelaide," he resumed, in a low tone, "I have now come from leaving your aunt in her grave, and to enter upon what I am about to do may appear unseeming at such a time. It is unseemly in point of fact, but it is but a single word I would say or ask, and what I have heard must justify it. Give me the hope, the permission, that at a future time I may ask you to be my wife."

"It is impossible," was her low reply; but Geoffrey saw that she could scarcely speak for agitation, and that she was in fact gasping for breath.

"Do you understand me?" he returned.

"I believe so. You are asking me to be your wife; is not that it? I thank you for the—the—the courtesy—the offer—but I cannot avail myself of it."

"Later I craved, Adelaide; that I might speak of it later."

"Neither now nor later. I beg you to drop the subject forever."

Geoffry Dane was likewise agitated, and pale as death. Were all the hopes of his later life to be thus ruthlessly blown away?

"Adelaide, what has changed you?" he resumed, in a deep tone. "I once thought——"

"Never mind what you once thought," she impetuously interrupted, "or what I thought either. The past is past."

"I can offer you now what I could not then, what I never, I solemnly declare, so much as glanced at the possibility of; I can offer to make you mistress of this castle and these broad lands."

Some emotion appeared to overcome her, for she buried her face in her hands and was shaking as though she had the ague. With an effort she looked up, and steadied her voice to speak.

"You need not enlarge upon it; I perfectly understand. You would make me Lady Dane."

"I would make you Lady Dane and my dear wife," he interposed, in a tone of the deepest tenderness. "Oh, Adelaide, let this misery end! What has come between us?"

"But I cannot accept the offer," she more calmly continued, completely ignoring his last sentence, and retreating backwards, for he had made as if he would take her hands. "Geoffry Dane, *I pray you* let this subject cease, now and forever."

"Adelaide!"

"Cease, cease," she implored. "I can never give you any other answer."

"But this is inexplicable—most strange. You must assign me the cause for your estrangement."

"No other answer, no other answer," she reiterated, in a tone that savored of alarm. "The broad fact is sufficient; why go into details?"

"It is *not* sufficient, Adelaide. I have a right to demand its cause."

"I shall never give it you. You ask me to be your wife, and I refuse. There it must end."

"Are we to part thus—in anger—in dissatisfaction?"

"Not in anger, unless you choose. I thank you, Geoffry; for your courtesy as much as though I had accepted it." And now, you must forgive me for reminding you what to-day is; that your 'one word' has lengthened into many, and that I wish to be alone."

Geoffry Dane withdrew; he could not well do otherwise. But, overwhelmed as he felt with disappointment, unpleasantly perplexed and puzzled though he was at her curious conduct, there was yet a hope lurking within him which seemed to whisper that a little time might set things to rights—that Lady Adelaide Errol would still be his.

CHAPTER VIII.

MARGARET BORDILLION—TIFFLE.

About half a mile from Dane Castle, standing almost at a right angle between the castle and the village of Danesheld, was the dwelling of Mr. Lester, or, as he was sometimes styled in the vicinity, Squire Lester. It was a substantial, red-brick building, known by the name of Danesheld Hall, and but for its large size might have been taken for a farm-house, surrounded as it was by out-buildings, barns, sheds, rick-yards, poultry-yards, and other appurtenances that a superior farm generally possesses. Its site was somewhat solitary, no dwellings being in the immediate vicinity, while the large, wild wood at the back, ranging out and extending to some distance, did not tend to render its aspect more cheerful. The wood belonged to Lord Dane, and was a favorite resort of poachers.

Now, it may be as well to state before going on, that Mr. Lester's property was not entailed. It had come to him by bequest, not by inheritance. A distant relative of the late owner, he had been made the heir, unexpectedly to himself—the heir, upon the condition that he should take up his residence on the estate, and make the hall his home. He was a dashing young guardsman then, poor and proud, and he scarcely knew whether to be pleased or annoyed. The fortune was most welcome; but to vegetate in the country and be dubbed "the squire"—he winced at that. However, we get reconciled to most things in time, and so did George Lester. He sold out, married, and took up his abode at Danesheld. In course of years his wife died, leaving him with two children, Wilfred and Maria, the latter four years younger than her brother.

Mr. Lester was now nearly forty years of age, but he did not look it. He was a fine handsome man, rather "fast" yet, a great admirer of beauty, fond of society, and exceedingly popular. To say that he had become attached to Lady Adelaide, would be scarcely a right phrase to use. He had not suffered himself to become so, seeing that she was engaged to her cousin, Captain Dane. He admired Lady Adelaide greatly, he felt that he could love her; very delighted and proud would he have been to make her Lady Adelaide Lester, but for that previous engagement to Harry Dane.

But then came Harry Dane's death; the barrier was removed, and Mr. Lester's heart leaped up within him. Not immediately did he speak; the deaths following rapidly at the castle one upon another, barred its propriety; but when the rumor reached him that Lady Adelaide was about to return to Scotland, he threw propriety to the winds, and besought her to become his wife. She requested a day or two for consideration, and then accepted him.

Mr. Lester urged their immediate marriage; where was the use of her traveling to Scotland, he said; better be married at once from the castle, and obviate its necessity. Lady Adelaide, as an objection to haste, put forth her aunt's recent death. But Mr. Lester replied that circumstances altered cases, and he thought haste in this instance was justifiable. Lord Dane agreed with him. He told them both that he felt his own life waning quickly, and should be better content to leave Adelaide with a legal protector. So the usual formal preliminaries and preparations were in their case dispensed with, and the wedding-day was fixed.

"Geoffry," said Lord Dane to his nephew, "I cannot leave my bed and accompany them to church to give her away. Will you attend for me?"

It was the first positive information Geoffry Dane had received of the forthcoming marriage of Lady Adelaide. Vague reports, half surmises, had penetrated to him, but he believed them not. A deadly pallor overspread his face, too sudden, too intense to be concealed; and it startled Lord Dane.

"Be a man, Geoffry. If she won't have you, if she prefers somebody else, you can't alter it; but don't sigh for her after the fashion of a love-sick girl. Adelaide is beautiful, but she is not the wife *I* should like to choose; she is capricious and unsteady as the breeze. Forget her, and look abroad for somebody better; there's as good fish in the sea as ever came out of it."

Geoffry's color was coming back to him, and he made an effort to smooth his brow—to pass it off lightly.

"Will you go to church and officiate for me, Geoffry?"

"No, sir," he answered in a low tone, but one that betrayed firm resolution. "If she marries George Lester of her own inclination, why—let her. But I will not take part in it."

Not only to Geoffry Dane did the projected union bring its pangs. Mr. Lester's first wife had been a Miss Bordil-

tion, a lady of a good family, but a poor one—there was a saying in their vicinity, "Poor and proud as a Bordillion." During Mrs. Lester's last illness, which was known to be a fatal one, a very distant relative of hers, but still a Bordillion, was staying with her. They had been girls together, close and tried friends since, and Mrs. Lester besought a promise from Margaret Bordillion that she would remain at the hall after her coming death, and watch over her young daughter, Maria. Margaret Bordillion was a delicate-looking woman of two or three and thirty, and the pink hue came into her cheeks as she thought of what the world might say did she remain an inmate of the house of the somewhat gayly-inclined George Lester. But when death is brought palpably before us—and Margaret Bordillion knew that it was very near to that chamber, as she held the damp hand, and looked down at the wasted face of Mrs. Lester—minor considerations are lost in the vista of the future, which now comes so palpably before us; that solemn future where we must all be gathered together and render up our accounts, and we feel far more anxious to fulfill our duty, wherever it may lie, than to be troubled at what the "world will say." Mrs. Lester received the promise she craved, that Margaret Bordillion would—at any rate for a time—remain at the hall to take charge of Maria.

"And remember, Margaret," whispered Mrs. Lester, drawing Margaret's ear down, that she might catch unmistakably the low accents, "should any warmer feeling arise between you and George—it may be so—should he ever seek to make you his wife, remember that I now tell you I should be pleased with it."

"How can you contemplate such a thing! how can you speak of it—at this moment?" interrupted Miss Bordillion, aghast. "You, his wife, can calmly enter upon the subject of his marrying another!"

"The world and its passions are fading from me, Margaret," was the reply of Mrs. Lester. "It almost seems as if I had already left it. I feel no doubt that George will marry again; he is most likely to do so; and I would prefer that he should make you my children's mother rather than any other woman."

Mrs. Lester died, and Miss Bordillion continued at Daneshold Hall. But she kept herself very much in the background, more as though she were only Maria's governess, and declined to preside as the hall's mistress. She regulated the servants, and the domestic affairs, but she never officiated at table in the place of Mrs. Lester; when Mr. Lester had visitors, she frequently did not appear, remaining in private with Maria; and she quite as often sat in her own sitting-room, as joined Mr. Lester. Maria was only eight years old at the time of her mother's death; had she been more of a woman, Miss Bordillion would have felt her position less awkward. Some ladies might not have found any awkwardness in it; but Miss Bordillion was of an unusually sensitive temperament, exceedingly alive to the refined proprieties of life.

Two years had now passed over her head since Mrs. Lester's death, and what had they brought forth? Love. Thrown into constant contact with George Lester, who was a man of remarkably attractive manners, to Miss Bordillion as to others; ever dwelling on the words spoken by Mrs. Lester, Miss Bordillion had, at first unconsciously to herself, become deeply attached to him. And when a woman's love has lain dormant for the first five-and-thirty years of her life, and is then awakened, it bursts into a lasting passion—one that the young little know of. Timid, modest, retiring, she nourished it in secret, gradually giving way to the hope that she should be what Mrs. Lester had suggested, his second wife; a hope that soon grew to intensity—nay, to expectation. And Margaret Bordillion's days, now, were as one long dream of paradise.

More especially high beat her heart one morning, for her hopes appeared to be nearing their realization. It was a hot summer's day at the close of July, and as the party rose from breakfast, Mr. Lester remarked that, while the excessive heat lasted, it would be better to have the breakfast laid in the dining-room, which did not face the morning sun.

"I will tell the servants to-day," said Miss Bordillion.

Wilfred Lester was at home for his holidays, which, however, were drawing to an end. He was a high-spirited boy of fourteen, though, it must be confessed, given to be passionate and disobedient on occasions; his eyes were of an intensely violet blue, his hair and eyelashes dark, and he gave promise of being a handsome man. Maria and Edith had run out to the lawn, and Wilfred vaulted after them. A pretty little girl of eleven, was Edith Bordillion, now on a visit at the hall. She was the daughter of Major Bordillion, and niece of Margaret.

The children were gamboling on the lawn, caring nothing for the heat, and Mr. Lester stood at the window watching them. Miss Bordillion remained in her seat at the breakfast table, reading a letter which the morning post had brought.

"Look here, Margaret," Mr. Lester suddenly exclaimed. "Step this way a minute."

She put aside her letter and went to him.

"Has it ever struck you, Margaret, what a famous conservatory might be carried out from this end window?"

"It would be an excellent spot for one," she replied. "I think I once heard you make the same remark."

"No doubt. It has been in my mind some time. I suppose I must set about it now."

"Why now?" inquired Miss Bordillion.

Mr. Lester laughed; it was what might be called a shy laugh, and as he replied to the question, his usually free tone had a tinge of embarrassment in it.

"It is two years—more—since Katharine died; I may begin to look out soon for some one to supply her place. In that case the old house ought to be brightened up. What say you, Margaret?"

Margaret Bordillion said nothing. She stood with her eyes cast down, and her cheeks glowing. She certainly did not construe the words into an offer; she had better sense; but she did believe that George Lester's intentions pointed to herself; his embarrassment of manner may have aided the thought. *He* saw the marks of confusion; it was impossible that she could conceal them, standing facing him, as she did, in the glowing brightness of the morning; and he attributed them to displeasure; he thought she was feeling pained at the idea of Katharine's place being filled up.

"Margaret," he said, in a low, tender tone, as he gently laid his hand upon her shoulder, though neither the tone nor the action was born of tenderness for *her*, "it is not good for a man to be alone. Katharine is gone, but we are living. Ponder over what I have hinted, and try and get over your distaste to it."

Mr. Lester stepped out at the window, which opened to the ground, as he concluded, and joined the children. And Margaret Bordillion?—she remained standing as he had left her in the day's brightness, type of the brightness which had rushed over and was illumining her whole soul. "I shall be his wife, at last," she softly murmured; "his wife! his wife! how have I deserved so intense a happiness?"

The servants entered to remove the breakfast things, and that aroused her. She called to her the two little girls, and went with them upstairs to the study, to superintend, as usual, their lessons.

The day went on to its close, its calm varied only by an outbreak between Master Wilfred and Tiffie. Tiffie, one of the sourest of virgins, was the head servant at the hall, and liked to rule with an overbearing hand. She was housekeeper and mistress, subject, of course, to the authority of Miss Bordillion; but Miss Bordillion interfered but little. Tiffie, if not of a desirable temper, was neither of a kindly disposition; the servants called her cross-grained, and Miss Bordillion, truth to say, felt afraid of her. When Mrs. Lester died, and Tiffie found that Miss Bordillion was to remain, Tiffie went to her master and gave warning. Mr. Lester would not take it; he fancied that the hall, deprived both of mistress and housekeeper, would inevitably come to something bad; and he raised Tiffie's wages, and told her she must stop. Tiffie ungraciously consented to a three months' further sojourn; but when the three months came to an end, and Tiffie found how little Miss Bordillion troubled her—that she had, in fact, far more sway than in the days of her late mistress, Tiffie said no more about leaving. But she hated Miss Bordillion, simply because the latter was nominally placed over her; and Tiffie was one who could hate to some purpose.

Another subject of her dislike was Master Lester, and it was returned by him. That sort of repulsion must have existed between them, which two persons will sometimes entertain, one to the other, unexplainable by themselves or in metaphysics; and when Wilfred was at home there were frequent contests between him and Tiffie. On this occasion it was sharper than customary; so sharp and loud as to disturb the household; Mr. Lester was out, but Miss Bordillion, as in duty bound, interposed her authority, and ordered them both before her. It was an unusual procedure for her to make; induced possibly by a foreshadowing idea of the full and indisputable authority she might soon be vested with in that house. Miss Bordillion found that Tiffie was in the wrong—had provoked the boy unjustifiably; and she reprimanded her.

Tiffie was pretty nearly stunned with indignation; truth to say, though the fault lay on her side this time, it was as often on Wilfred's; and she withdrew, vowing vengeance in her heart against the world in general and Miss Bordillion in particular. The servants suffered from her temper that day, as they scarcely ever had suffered, and the murmurs were loud and deep.

"Let her have her fling out," cried the butler, who had been a passive listener. "It won't be for long now. I have heard news this evening."

"What's that?" cried Tiffie, turning sharply round upon him. "Did you speak of me?"

"I tell them they may as well let you have your fling out, Mrs. Tiffie," he quietly answered. "Another week or two, and it will be at an end."

"You are a fool," retorted Tiffie.

"Perhaps I am," said the man. "Perhaps master would be if he didn't set himself about remedying this. But he is going to, and to marry a wife, and to give the house a mistress—which will put your nose out of joint, ma'am."

"Is it true?" uttered one of the other servants, all of whom stood in consternation.

"It is perfectly true; otherwise I should not have repeated it. In a couple of weeks at the most, I believe they'll be married."

His accent was serious, and they knew him to be a cautious and a truthful man. Even Tiffie felt the calamity was certain, and she turned cold all over.

"It's that animal, Miss Bordillion," she uttered, the conviction fixing itself into her mind; "it's she who has come over him, and no other. She's as sly as a cat."

The butler only smiled. It exasperated her beyond bearing, and she flung out of the room.

"I'll go to her this minute and tell her what I think, if I die for it," she muttered; "and the deuce himself shouldn't stop me."

Miss Bordillion was alone in the breakfast-room; they often sat in it on a summer's evening; it was so pleasant to be where the windows opened to the ground, and to step out when inclined. Mr. Lester was dining out that evening. The little girls were dragging a child's carriage to and fro on the lawn, in which were seated two dolls of state, Wilfred teasing them with all his might, and, altogether, making a great noise. Tiffie came brushing in, her face red. She had a long, sharp nose, and gray, sly, ferret's eyes, was very little in person, and generally stealthy in her movements. She was attired in an old brown silk dress and a white muslin apron.

"I lived in the family before you ever came near it, Miss Bordillion," began she, "and I think if this change was in view I might have been injected into it."

Miss Bordillion looked up, astonished at her abrupt entrance, her words, her manner altogether. Tiffie was literally panting with passion.

"Explain yourself," said Miss Bordillion.

"I say that it's a shame for the servants to have been enlightened, and for me, their head, to have been kept in the dark," burst out Tiffie. "But when things are set about in this kivert way it don't bring much luck."

"Explain yourself, I repeat," interrupted Miss Bordillion. "What are you speaking of? You forget yourself."

"It's announced in the kitchen by Jones that you and master are going to make a match of it," shrieked Tiffie. "I suppose master told him."

Miss Bordillion was completely taken aback; never had she been so much so in all her life. Tiffie's insolence was entirely merged in the news; it was *that* which took away her self-possession, and covered her with confusion. She blushed rosy red, she stammered, she faltered, bringing out some disjointed words that she "did no, know, she "was not sure." Tiffie read the signs only too correctly.

"Lovesick as a schoolgirl!" she contemptuously soliloquized; and then spoke aloud: "So, as I have not been used to underhand treatment, I'll give warning now, if you please."

And, leaving Miss Bordillion in a whirl of happy perplexity, she strode back to the servants, and boasted of what she had done.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed the butler, "you never have been such an idiot! You complimented me with being a fool just now, but you might have kept it for yourself more justly. It is not Miss Bordillion that master is going to marry."

Tiffie sat down, overcome with sundry emotions.

"Not Miss Bordillion! Who is it, then?"

"The pretty young lady at the castle, Lady Adelaide. I should be sorry to put my foot in it, as you have done."

Tiffie said nothing in reply. She sat silent for at least half an hour, revolving in her mind the points of all she had heard and seen, and drawing her own deductions. Then she arose, and proceeded again to the breakfast-room.

Miss Bordillion sat as she had left her, in the same chair, in the same position, her eyes fixed on vacancy, and the rosy hue of happy love lighting her countenance. She was lost in the mazes of dreamland, illusive dreamland, upon which a rude blow was now about to fall, one that would shatter its bliss forever.

Very different was the present Tiffie, meekly standing there, from the outrageous Tiffie of half an hour ago. She deprecatingly held her hands together, smoothing them one over the other, and stole covert glances with her false eyes at Miss Bordillion.

"I am come to apologize, ma'am, for what I said just now, which I shouldn't have done but for laboring under a misapprehension. Them servants led me into it, and I should like to turn the whole lot away. I find there were no grounds for coupling your name with master's."

"Your words took me so entirely by surprise, Tiffie, that I did not meet them or reprove you as I ought," was the quiet reply of Miss Bordillion. "I will now merely observe that Mr. Lester entertains no present intentions of changing his condition, so far as I know. Do not offend again, or take up groundless notions."

"I was only mistaken in the lady, you see, ma'am," returned Tiffie, standing her ground; "I thought it had been you—for which, as I say, I'm here to beg pardoning—whereas it's somebody else. Master is about to marry."

Slowly Miss Bordillion gathered in the words. Had they meaning, or had they not? Her heart beat wildly as she gazed at Tiffie.

"In less than two weeks from this the wedding is to come off," proceeded Tiffie, venturing on the unqualified assertion, and positively reveling in the misery she knew she was inflicting. "A dainty bride she'll make, young and lovely as ever wore the orinje wreath; but master, so it's said, always had an eye for beauty. You don't seem as if you had heard it, ma'am. He marries Lady Adelaide."

Misery. Ay, misery as cruel as ever fell in this world. Margaret Bordillion's pulses stood still, and then began to beat with alarming quickness. All the blood in her body seemed turning to stone, her brain whirled, her heart turned sick, the things around were growing dim to her.

"Water—a drop of water, Tiffie," she gasped out, as her sight was failing.

Tiffie whisked round to where some stood, a wicked look of satisfaction on her countenance, now that it was turned from view. She poured some into a tumbler, and carried it to Miss Bordillion, beginning to speak in a condoling tone.

"These changes is unpleasant, ma'am, when they come upon us by surprise; but——"

Tiffie ceased, for she saw that her words were falling on a deaf ear. Miss Bordillion lay in a fainting fit.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE PERSPIRATION OF PLANTS.

The opinion is very general that the drops which glitter so brightly on the leaves of plants beneath the bright rays of the morning sun are deposited there by the atmosphere during the night. This, no doubt, is often and commonly the case, but it certainly is not the only source from whence they come. Nothing is more easy of proof than that plants perspire. Put a plant under a bell-glass, the leaves of which are removed from any possible contact with the earth, or with exhalations from it, by means of metallic or other plates; deprive the air enclosed within the glass of its moisture, by placing a small quantity of some hygrometric substance therein, and it will be found that notwithstanding the admission of moisture from without is absolutely impossible, there will still be a collection of pearly drops on the leaves. The sunflower perspires more than a man does by a great deal, that is to say, from his face alone, seeing that the flower has no body which can be compared with the body of a man. It has been estimated that the quantity exhaled from the sunflower exceeds the quantity which runs from the forehead of a man who gains his living by the sweat of his brow in the proportion of fifteen to one. There are many other plants which, like the *Cesalpinia pluviosa*, yield water in such abundance that it is constantly trickling down from leaf to leaf, and actually, as in the case of the tree just mentioned, contributing largely to the supply of the people who live in their vicinity. This enormous exudation of moisture has been attributed to the extreme superabundance of vitality which vegetables possess. The functional activity of some is quite extraordinary: what will be thought of the fact that at the moment when certain of them flower, the flower reaches a temperature of from 100 to 160 degrees?

WHAT men want is not talent—it is purpose; in other words, not the power to achieve, but the will to labor.

A CONFESSION.

BY MARY E. COLEY.

Oh, passionate, crimson rose,
Oh, lilies, stately and white,
Give forth your exquisite perfume,
And sweeten the air to-night.
Upon the meadow and mountain
The silvery moonlight lies,
While a dim, faint tint of the sunset
Still brightens the western skies.

The night is rich with its portion
Of moonlight and starlight and flowers,
And my heart drinks in the glory
Of the beautiful silent hours;
Because I have heard a story—
A sweet old story—to-day;
Because it was whispered to me
In the sweet old-fashioned way.

I know that beyond this glory
Are clouds that are heavy with rain;
I know that somewhere before me
Lies my portion of crosses and pain;
Yet never beat heart more happy
Than mine is beating to-night,
And I look toward the unknown future
With eyes that are fearless and bright.

He held my hand and he whispered
Words that were earnest and true;
Then we talked awhile in the manner
That lovers are wont to do.
He gave me a crimson blossom,
I gave him a lily sweet,
The one with a grand, rich passion—
The other, with grace replete.

Oh, passionate, crimson blossom,
Oh, lily, stately and white,
I will place you both on my bosom,
And keep you ever in sight;
I want the one for an emblem
Of his deep, true love for me,
And the other to be a token
Of its spotless purity.

SIMON GIRTY,
THE RENEGADE.

An Historical Tale of the Border.

By CHARLES McKNIGHT, Esq.,
Author of "Old Fort Du Quesne."

CHAPTER XCV.

GIRTY AND LARRY HAVE A TILT.

As Larry was thus ruminating, "chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy," and his eyes brightened as his heart lightened, Simon Girty sauntered scowlingly up to him, glared silently at his captive for some little time, Larry looking down and affecting not to take the slightest notice of his presence.

"Ha! ha! ha! ye meddling Irish fool," he sneered out at last, with one of his most rasping and exasperating chuckles. "Ye've made a d—n purty mess of it, haven't ye? What will I do with you now, ye blatherskite?"

"An' shure, Girthy," replied Larry, with modest demeanor and low, even tones, for he had carefully deliberated on his policy; "an' av you don't know that, by me sowl, I'll be sore bothered to larn ye. How wud it sarve to sind me back to the fort as a terrible warning. By the powers, captain, but it wud surphrize them intirely."

Girty scanned the prisoner, scarce able to understand his easy indifference. At last he blurted out: "I see you captin me now, at last. By heavens, it's best for ye. I really don't know sometimes whether ye are more knave or fool."

"Say fool, av it plaze yiz betther, Girthy, for upon my faix that same I be to purtind to match wits wid a dape won like yerself. An' shure, mon, but yer a moighty deludher."

"Oh, none o' yer fool blarney with me," said Girty, snappishly. "That fetch won't work. I fairly hate yer grinning chops and insulting ways. You've completely ruined two ambushes for me, and now by —— you've got to die. I won't be eternally put out by an ornery, low-lived thing like you. I'll do *this* for ye, though: I'll not let the reds torture ye, but you may choose yer own death."

"Begorra, thin, an' I'm mooch obleeged to yiz," said Larry, easily and pleasantly. "Troth, an' av I can die my own way I'm much loike Lanty O'Roony—uv the O'Rooneys, County Down, ye moind—who had wunce the same offer, and said an' av 'twere left to him, 'twas uv *ould age* he'd rayther choose; but av that's too slow, Girthy, shure it's choked wid honey I'd be, so sind to the fort for Mistress Donohue, an' let her smodder me wid kisses. I'm convanyent for the sakerlice. But I'm not much feared uv yer killing me. Simon Girthy *daren't* do it! There's that in the fort'ull kape him——"

"What, you born idiot, growled Girty, his wrath again mounting fast; "*daren't* do it! We'll see! Ye've bantered me once to-day: I'll take no second. Ho, there! Sergeant Dekker! have a file o' muskets at the spring in half an hour. If ye've any will or prayers or requests to make, Larry, best make them now. I won't be too hard on ye."

"Only one question to axe," said Larry, demurely. "Where's Misthress Malott and her daughter that I've heern wor found?"

"What is it to you, you prying busybody?" answered Girty, crabbedly.

"Faith an' sure not much. Bedad it's more *your* bizzness nor mine, Girthy; but ye towld me to axe quistions, and, bad cess to ye, ain't I dooin that same?"

Girty could not help being surprised and interested, and at last condescended, in a sulky voice, to say:

"They're both at Detroit, and Kate Malott's now my own wife. Have ye anything to say agin it?"

"Whirroo and murther!" exclaimed Larry, now feeling more joyful and confident. "Ooh, no objiction the laste bit in the wur-r-rid, av the leddy's not forninst it; but are ye spaking God's truth now, Girthy?"

"Odd questions for a dying sinner," sneered Girty. "Don't ye believe me? Was married near three months since, just after Crawford's defeat. Mr. Malott gave away the——"

"*Misther* Malott, an' who the divil's he, Girthy?"

"Don't ye know? It's too long a story to tell now; but he's the one your cussed party called the Hermit."

"Phat! the Harmit! Howly Joseph! an' ye don't mane that! Blissed martyrs, but shure he's the quare spook, innyhow. I niver seed him near, but I've harkened the others spake uv his wild eyes and fell uv uncombed hair. Well, well, and he's the——"

"Yes," promptly interrupted Girty, tiring of these questions; "the whole family's together now but Harry, and we don't despair of even finding *him* some day."

"Didn't I tell yiz, Girthy!" now spoke Larry with the greatest delight and confidence, a broad grin on his face, "that you wouldn't kill the Donohue! Shure I've found the little shaver, Harry, my——"

"What!" said Girty, starting up as if he had been shot and catching Larry by the throat. "Ye lie! ye villain, ye lie! it's only a fetch to git out o' my clutches. Ye *never* saw him! ye never *will* see him! Tell me all! all! or I'll throttle ye to death!"

"Blissid Vargin, yer at—it—now, ye—ebru—+l—murtherer!" gasped Larry, fairly growing black in the face. "Let up! ye divil, or ye'll ne'er hear more!"

Girty now relaxed his hold, looking somewhat confused. Soon as his helpless victim recovered breath he gasped out, indignantly:

"An' ye call yerself a mon, Girthy! Shame on ye! you moight as well try a fall wid a baby. Do but onshackle me wunst an' I'll bate ye in a brace o' shakes."

Larry, however, soon allowed himself to be pacified by Girty's excuses, and continued: "Sakes above, mon, but I'm feared to tell yiz more good news; it gives ye such choking feelings; but it's thrue as that I'm tied hand and fut—and begorra, ye can't dispute that, innyhow, seeing that yer still there—that I've found Harry, an' have him safe in yonder fort—frisky as a kitten."

"I can't believe it," said Girty, in great astonishment. "If it's true, 'twill be good for you, I promise; if not, 'twill be just the other way. How do ye know it's him?"

"On my faix but I'll prove it ye, av ye'll but squat and kape yer clutches to yersilf. But, as Father Lafferty used to say afore a sarmint, 'I moost prayface my discoorse' by telling til ye a dape secret that's mixed up wid my sthory. Av ye've been industhrious, Girthy, these powthery toimes o' war, indade then, not to be outdone by my betthers, an' so have I, for I'm joost as much marrhied as ye are," and here Larry winked at Girty with such an irrisistibly comical leer on his phiz, that even he had to return grin for grin.

"Married, Larry!" he exclaimed, incredulously, "and you a prisoner! Curse me if I don't believe ye'd dance a jig on yer own coffin. Who took pity on you, and when did ye find time to court?"

"Ooh, be jabers, wud ye have me sit spoiling and a moulding away till the moss growed on me back, and a purty and biseome lass loike Netteway joost consumin' wid luve for——"

"Netteway?" interrupted Girty, more surprised than before; "an Injin squaw! Why, man, that's worse and worse."

"Divil a bit uv it; for troth I'm rale marrhied by both book and praycher, and to a purty gur-rl that's as broight as the blissid sunshine, an' that's iver singing away loike a throstle; but I'll tell ye the whole sthory about her and the gossoon," and Larry now rapidly ran over his late adventure, leaving no doubt whatever in Girty's mind that the lad was Malott's long lost Harry, and his own brother-in-law.

"Strange story all this, Larry," he said, at last; "but I'll keep my word with you, boncat. I must have Harry if I have to swap you for him."

"Bedad, a d—d sinsible remark," said Larry, oracularly, and plainly much relieved; "and it's the Lord's own doings, too. We've all joost been putting uv our heads together—for the wee lad, d'ye moind, is a great pet wid the whole fort—how we'd get him to you and his mother, that myself and the young leddies knew so well, when along you come wid a bloody faction at yer heels. 'Talk uv the divil and wun uv his imps appears'—but shure, Biddy an' me'll miss the little mon moightily. He's loike an' own child to us, is Harry, and as for Biddy an' him, shure you'd think they were fed from the same breast. Och, hone! och, hone! though the young divil's no more nor knee high to a duck, he's joost the sun o' the shanty, that's phat he is!"

Sergeant Dekker now stepped up and touched his hat to Girty, saying: "The men all ready at the spring, captain, with rifles loaded as you ordered."

"All right, sergeant," said Girty, "but I've just changed my mind. Let them go back to camp."

The sergeant marched off, wondering.

"You see, Larry," said Girty, rising briskly, and commencing to untie Larry's thronga, "you've made a deuced narrow escape. Reckon I'll have to let you off this time. My Injuns will make a pother about it, too, but I'll risk it, for you'll be back again soon. It's onpossible that fifty can stand long agin four hundred, and I don't believe, if my count's right, that you have more than forty-eight."

This last was said with apparent indifference, but with a sly, eager, inquiring look at Larry, as if expecting an answer. Larry was shrewd enough to see this in a moment, and was at once on his guard. Girty had mentioned a fighting force in the fort more than double the actual number. It was the former's duty to augment it; so he said, in the most innocent and unsuspicious manner possible:

"I owe ye a good turn, Girthy, for this day's doins, an' I'd joost whisper to ye that av your spies have but counthed forty eight, they've been dhrunk as David's sow. We've the best men uv the border, too."

Girty looked annoyed.

"But you have no cannon and we have."

"By me song, thin, Girthy, ye must have bid them oucummun cloet, for none uv us cotched a glint o' them. I'll not argify the matther wid ye, but, by the power, av they can't show two barkers for yer ivory wun, my names not Larry, and the shorehouse and magoozin's joost that full uv lead and powther and muskite, that the dures can't be shut. Take an honest mon's advice, Girthy, for wunct, for betwixt you and me, ye'll have the biggest conthract ye've iver had in gittiug behind thim logs."

Girty bit his lip, greatly deceived by Larry's innocent looks and apparent friendliness. He ventures one shot more.

"They can't surely get any aid, for we've taken their messenger."

It was sad news to Larry that Captain Bogga was taken, but casting a sly look at Girty's face, he found reason to doubt the fact, so he said:

"And faith it'll be bad news to the fort boys that one of their expresses has been took. Av I may be so bould, phat kind uva mon was the wun ye kotched?"

"A fine, smart, active young scout," said the Renegade, boldly.

"Phat a tirrible whopper," thought Larry, to himself, for the only messenger that had left the fort for aid was Captain Bogga, the fort commandant, and an old square-set, gray-headed man, but he answered, demurely:

"Ooh, by the powers, that moost have been young Mike Wheat ye've cotched; an' shure but his poor mother will be heart-sorry to hear it. The other chap was an far oulder mon, wid a build like a buffalo; but ye moost know, Girthy, it wud be moighty mane and unfair in the loikes o' me to be blathering the sacrets o' the fort. I joost minded to put ye on yer guard. Ye'll surely not axe me inny furdher."

Girty darted a quick, suspicious, scrutinizing glance at Larry's face, but all there looked so calm, so bland and innocent, that he took alarm at once. If Larry's news were true, he must not lose a moment.

"Well, I've no more time to fool!" he jerked out, snappishly, as if he was slinging each word at his companion. "Go back to the fort and send the boy to me! I'll have to trust you, I suppose, but if you once deceive me, I'll catch and torture ye if I lose every man I've got."

Larry chuckled to himself at this evidence of his having again outwitted the outlaw, but merely answered:

"Och, divil the wun o' me'll go at all, at all. I'll niver sit on a stump so long as grass grows or wather runs on inny such dirthy bizzness. Ye moost captin' that job yerself, Girthy. Bad scran to ye, but 'twould be a purthy thing to have the Whaling people think that the Donohue cud be making a mane spekkelashun out uv the wee laddie, and all to save his own worthless carcass. By the great rock of Cashel av I wudn't bide here till my poll was grizzled afore I'd do inny such 'ondacent, mismannerly thrick."

"You tarnal fool, what d'ye mean!" roared Girty; "but stay, I'm going to make another and last summons, and will manage both together."

CHAPTER XCVI.

SIMON GIRTY ENCOUNTERS LYDIA BOGGS.

Just then Captain Pratt, of the Queen's Rangers, came up, and said: "Captain Girty, here comes a white flag from the fort carried by a woman and a boy."

"A white flag, and carried by a woman? It's an open insult! By the eternal I think they might have trusted Simon Girty enough to send their leader. I hope, though, they've agreed to my terms."

"Schwate modher of heaven!" exclaimed Larry, stretching up on tiptoe and looking towards the fort in surprise and alarm; "av it beent purty Misthress Boggs and the wee Harry. Tear an' ages, phat the divil's broke loose?"

"What's that!" said Girty, angrily, but with a certain confusion, too, as if well remembering his once shooting at the fair fugitive as she was swimming the Ohio; "that port, sassy, little jade that so defied and flurted me to my very face. I'll not receive her! Here, Pratt, call up a squad of your rangers and do the prettys to the leddy."

The young officer was glad enough to comply. The men were drawn up in file, and Captain Pratt advanced some few yards to meet the flag of truce.

Lydia and little Harry—for it was indeed they—advanced quickly and confidently toward the spot. The boy looked somewhat frightened as he saw the staring savages who, gathered around in groups, were gazing with intense earnestness at the strangers, and especially did he cling tightly to his protector's dress when he caught the gleaming eyes of Na-con-sta, his Indian father, who seemed about to rush forward and snatch him.

Lydia, neatly and becomingly dressed, and with a bright flush of excitement kindling her eye and mantling her fair cheeks, walked steadily along, looking neither to right nor left, holding Harry tightly by the hand, and occasionally stooping to address him some encouraging words. If the spirited young girl felt alarm at the knots of grim, stern-looking savages she was obliged to pass, she showed it not, but bowing gracefully to Captain Pratt, she said, in quick, nervous tones:

"Do I address the leader of the forces come against our settlement?"

"I am *one* of the leaders," answered Captain Pratt, politely, evidently greatly struck with the unusual grace and beauty of his fair interlocutor. "Captain Girty stands there to the rear."

"Excuse me, sir, but the matter that brings me here is one that interests Mr. Girty alone."

"Captain Girty has himself delegated me—Miss Boggs, I believe your name is—to receive you and hear your message."

"And yet, sir, I must insist on seeing *him*, if you please," said Lydia, in a prompt but decided tone.

"All right, Miss Boggs, I'll send him to the front."

"Confound her impudence—suppose I'll have to face her," said Girty, on hearing her demand, and for the first time removing his eager, ardent gaze from the boy Harry.

He came up with more of a bold stride and swagger than would have been the case had he felt quite at his ease.

"Well, ma'am, I'm told you want to see me. What is it?"

Lydia looked at the Renegade quietly, but with an undefined smile of sarcasm on her pretty and piquant face, and then bowing with dignity, said, in meaning tones:

"I believe, Captain Girty, we've met before."

"Are ye Miss Boggs?" said Girty, with an affected carelessness. "Yes, yes, believe we have. Ha! ha! ha! Ye didn't stay long with us. We were almost too rough for yer fine ladyship, eh?"

"Yes, somewhat. I felt more at home with the people about here; but you used some pretty far-reaching arguments to persuade me to stay, Captain. You sent some swift messengers after me, didn't you, Captain?"

"Ha! ha! ha! only done to fright ye. Jiminy, but didn't that mare swim, though!" answered the outlaw, striving to conceal his confusion under her frank, earnest eyes and direct queries by an affected laugh—only throttle-deep, however.

"Not half so fast as you swore, Captain," retorted Lydia. "You ran through your cursings like a litany. The air was fairly blue with them, but your volley of oaths hurt no more than your volley of bullets. But I'm not here to recall pleasant recollections, but am on important business."

"Yes," said Girty, more briskly and cheerfully now that he was off the tenter hooks. "I hope your people are now willing to listen to reason, and to make no useless resistance. You wouldn't have the slightest chance, Miss Boggs, not the slightest."

"There might be two opinions about that," said Lydia, promptly; "but I'm not authorized to mention anything like surrender! Don't think it was ever so much as thought of by a single——"

"Well, then, in God's name," replied

the disappointed Girty, hotly, "what are you here for?"

"You seem on very familiar terms with the Deity, Captain," continued Lydia, coolly and with one of those pleasant smiles which are so galling and exasperating, but which offer no excuse for open resentment. "I have heard that you have more claims to call below than above for your help; but, in brief, my business is simply to know whether you will exchange Larry there, whom I am glad to see unharmed, for this boy, whom I suppose you know."

"Oh, is that all?" answered Girty, now very much nettled; "well, why didn't you say so at once? A man would have out with his business and been gone long since, but a woman's too glad to get any and every chance to waggle her tongue, especially when at some one else's expense, that she don't know when to stop. Ye may know that the Irishman and I have arranged that long ago, so that, if that's your business, it's done, and ye can march back again. Come here, Harry, where ye belong," he continued, kindly, holding out his hand to the boy.

"Before I let go, Girty," said Lydia, "please tell me where Mrs. Malott is, and whether you'll promise to be kind to Harry whom we all love so much."

"Don't need any promise, ma'am. He'll be in first-rate hands, and Mrs. Malott's in Detroit, and is now my mother-in-law."

"What!" said Lydia, with unaffected surprise. "You don't mean to say you're married to Kate Malott?"

"I *do* mean it and'll stick to it. What could I do? Ha! ha! ha! *You* ran away from me, or it might have been otherwise; why make objections *now*."

This was said coarsely and loudly, with an air that meant, "I'm even with you at last."

Lydia colored to the very roots of her hair with vexation, but only said, with curling lip:

"*I* don't object, God knows, except on the poor girl's account; it's a mere question of taste. If Larry is free to come, permit him now go back with me."

Then stooping to assure Harry, she told him that Girty was now his brother, would treat him kindly, and that he would soon see his mother and all his brothers and sisters. She did not then know of the existence of his father.

Poor little Harry, so mysteriously knocked about for years, burst into a flood of tears, and seemed as if he could not give up so many friends to go to that stern, loud-laughing stranger, but at last, seeing Larry approaching, the little fellow tearfully kissed Lydia for the last time, and with open arms ran to meet that still older and better friend.

Larry caught the little fellow to his breast and hugged and kissed him with the tenderest affection. Then walking up to Girty, he put the lad in his arms, asking him, with moistened eyes, to be ever good and kind to the "little shaver."

Girty took Harry gently, kissed him, and tried all he could to soothe the lad and divert his attention, while Larry, amid the cheers of the British and the wondering looks of the silent, onlooking savages, joined Lydia, to be again received with other rounds of hearty cheers from the fort.

Not a half hour passed before Girty appeared and made a second formal demand for surrender, swearing that, if again refused, the fort would be stormed and every soul massacred. He was answered with shouts of defiance and told to remember Col. Crawford's dreadful fate.

It was now sundown. The assailants had no time to waste, and opened on the fort in dead earnest and from all sides.

We have already stated that Fort Henry was one of the most substantial structures of the kind in the West. It was planned by General Clarke, and was a parallelogram in shape, the longest side overlooking the Ohio, which there runs directly south. It had a bastion on each corner and the captain's house in the centre, which was two stories high and with top so arranged as to serve for firing the one small cannon from. The pickets were, as stated, about seventeen feet high and ran all about the fort, enclosing a space of about one acre. Its *enceinte* included also several cabins, a storehouse, magazine, etc.

Such a fort as that, although completely bullet-proof, would have been knocked into splinters in a short time had the enemy cannon, but they had *not*, and Girty was afterwards led to disbelieve that part of Larry's story of the fort's having any. They could see one mounted on the captain's house, but thought it a wooden dummy, for a year or two before, the Fort Henry people *did* attempt to make a wooden cannon, which fact Girty learned, after he had seen Larry, from one of his men.

As the enemy advanced, therefore, they showed small fear of this little French piece, but dared the besieged to shoot. Sullivan, who had charge of this gun, waited until the enemy had approached quite close, and just as Pratt and Girty were shouting and pressing up their motley force in close order, the priming was touched off, and bang went the little "bull-dog," cutting a passage through the hostile ranks and filling up the sounding hills with its reverberating echoes.

If the sound were not sufficient the effect was, and Captain Pratt, who had heard guns before, leaped behind a tree, and shouted:

"Stand back! stand back! by heavens there's no wood about that!"

The Indians were now more wary, and sought cover wherever possible. Girty divided up his force into small parties, and violently stormed the fort from various quarters. He next attempted to fire it; and thus the whole of that anxious, terrible night was passed. Two only of the bastions could be used, and these, so small was the force, had to be occupied by turns.

All the females, Lydia Boggs at the head, were constantly engaged cooling or loading the rifles for the men. They had no intermission and no time to feel the sensation of fear.

Betsy Wheat, before mentioned, a woman of unusual size and strength, and of indomitable courage, did much to stimulate the defenders to extraordinary efforts and to nerve up the drooping spirits of the fatigued and despondent. She seemed to be everywhere at once, and her loud, stern voice urging on the laggard and uttering loud shouts of defiance to those outside, did much to encourage the little Spartan band of heroes. She had cause for energetic effort, for her husband and four sons were within the precincts of that rough log stockade.

CHAPTER XCVII.

GIRTY'S NOVEL CANNON—BETTY ZANE'S FEAT.

Girty had early seen the great importance of cannon, and being anxious to force a surrender before any aid could reach the fort, he was driven to his wits' end how to effect a breach. That once done he could pour in his fierce horde of savages and soon make an end of all resistance. They had early discovered Sullivan's piroque filled with cannon-balls, but of what use without a cannon to fire them!

A sudden thought struck his fertile brain. There was a well-equipped blacksmith shop, belonging to the Reikart brothers, standing without the walls, and provided with bars of iron, heavy chains, etc. Why not make a cannon of wood, bored to suit Sullivan's balls, and level it against the great gate?

No sooner thought than done. A huge tree-trunk was split and cut out with tomahawks, and the pieces spliced together again with chains and hoops of bar iron. A touch-hole was burned out, and at last the formidable gun was done and ready to open for them a yawning way.

Both whites and reds had watched the work's progress with ever-increasing excitement. They clustered about with intense expectation. The wooden monster now lies prone; its hollow throat receives the heavy load of powder and ball, it is carefully trained against the massive gate. The man stands ready with the lighted brand, the force selected to make the rush are massed to one side, breathless and eagerly expectant. An instantaneous hush falls upon both sides. All depends on that great impromptu gun.

Ready! aim! fire! and fizz! whiz! boom! chebang! goes the whole contraption with a dull heavy sound, like a blast, sending pieces of wood, iron, and simple, gaping savages high into the air, and dealing death and dismay to all around.

A wild shout of triumph burst forth from the ramparts. A long pause and a dead silence ensues outside. The discomfited enemy are picking up their dead and wounded.

Some time later a large number of the savages entered the loft of a log-cabin on the north side of the fort and commenced their customary yells and dances, making night hideous with their horrid clamor. Various attempts were made to dislodge them with plentiful discharges of grape, but all were ineffectual.

At length the chief gunner, John Tait—a few weeks after killed and partly eaten by savages near Grave creek—loaded up with ball and took a more careful aim. The missile, probably more by "luck than good guidance," cut off a chief sleeper of the cabin, and let the whole structure down with all its contents. That dance came to a sudden termination, and the "light fantastic toers" drew back in dismay.

The French piece was fired off that night not less than sixteen times, the assailants being thereby fully convinced that there was no "Quaker gun" about it.

Despairing of accomplishing more by various stratagems, by rushes on the gate, and by picking off the wary defenders, shot at through the port-holes, the enemy now resorted to fire. More than twenty organized attempts were made by heaping up bundles of hemp against the walls, to fire the fort or else make a breach.

In vain! the hemp was too wet, and the sleepless, watching defenders too vigilant. Dry wood and other combustibles were then tried, but with the same result; and at last the dreary night was dragged through, and another day dawned on the spent and over-wrought little garrison. The baffled foe retired to the Indian Spring to recruit their strength and concoct new stratagems.

The weary little band of heroes now lay down by turns to snatch a little needful rest after their extraordinary exertions. Those who remained awake were ceaselessly occupied in moulding bullets, renewing flints, strengthening the pickets, etc. The besiegers were nearer a breach than they knew. Lydia Boggs, who was busy with scarce any intermission during the whole of the siege, used to relate in after life that the pickets were so much decayed in places that they could not have withstood a united pressure of the enemy. At one time several at the northwest corner suddenly gave way and fell, but owing to a heavy growth of peach trees just outside, the fact was not noted by the foe.

We may briefly allude to one little episode during these firings. Larry was that night stationed on the river rampart, a side so well protected by nature that it was negligently guarded.

He thought he saw the forms of several savages rolling up a bale of hemp from below the bluff. He hunted up Ham Kerr and related his suspicions. The two hurried to the spot. Yes, there the fellows were, sure enough, working away like beavers.

Larry, with that unthinking recklessness which ever distinguished him, bantered his companion to jump right down upon the assailants as soon as they would get directly under the walls; but Kerr was too wary, but said he would "larn Larry a trick worth two o' that."

He now hastily ran to the storeroom, procured a rope, which he arranged like a lasso, and waiting till one of the Indians was stooping down to fire the hemp, he carefully and skillfully dropped the noose over his head and body, then tightened it with a sudden jerk.

He and Larry now commenced to haul in the line. The ughs, the struggles and contortions, and the cries for help, when the savage found himself by some mysterious agency first dangling in the air and then mounting steadily aloft, were ludicrous in the extreme.

But when a light was brought, and the painted head first appeared above the stockade, and the reddy's rolling eyes first caught sight of the two sportsmen who were seeking to land their fish safely, the mingled expressions of rage, horror and disgust pictured on that astounded savage's face, are beyond the power of pen to describe. The two fishermen were so convulsed with the irresistible comicality of the whole scene that they came near dropping their game; but at last Larry caught him by his scalp-lock, and he was at once secured and lodged in the guardhouse.

We have already stated that Colonel Eb Zane, with a portion of his family, his slave Sam, and two brothers by the name of Green, remained in his own bullet proof and loopholed cabin a short distance east of the fort. These five brave men and skillful marksmen maintained an obstinate defence, and made any and every approach so galling and fatal, that they were even able to save some of the cabins on either side.

Their fire, however, had been so incessant and protracted, that the stock of powder gave out entirely during the first night. The enemy's temporary withdrawal the next morning afforded the only chance of a renewal. Unless a new supply could be obtained from the fort, from which they were completely isolated, all was lost.

An anxious council was called, and various plans suggested. It would be a most perilous undertaking, and the chances of success few indeed. Colonel Zane would not order any to the hazardous business, but submitted the supreme necessity to their courage and devotion. Silas Zane and black Sam both volunteered, and while they were trying to decide to whom should belong the desperate enterprise, a "forlorn hope," as it were, Betty Zane, with a true heroism and devotion which has never been surpassed, spoke up with rare spirit and decision and claimed the honor.

The proposal was rejected at once, but she instantly pressed her determination with redoubled earnestness, and was deaf to all remonstrance. She passionately argued that the foe was numerous and the defenders few, and that every man's life was now of inestimable value, and, while rapidly making her preparations, concluded thus:

"Now Eb, you needn't say another word, for go I must and go I will. The trip is not near so risky as it looks. The savages are chiefly scattered about towards the north side, while I will run round to the south sally-port; besides, they'll scarce suspect anything from a mere girl, and will, doubtless, let me pass unchallenged. But should I be captured, or even shot"—and here the face of the fair young enthusiast, like that of Joan d'Arc, was glorified with a radiance almost angelic—"can I not better be spared at such a desperate crisis than one of you? Don't you see?"

"No, indeed, Bet; I do not see," answered Colonel Zane, gravely. "The lurking savages might spare you on account of your sex; but suppose they didn't, and shot down my own dear sister, how would I feel? Would much rather go myself."

"That *would* be a sharp thing, brother, wouldn't it! When all the redskins know you, and would be glad to pierce your heart with a hundred bullets, leaving Elizabeth a widow and all your children fatherless. No! no! I'll go. We women of the border must learn to do and dare. Have we not heard of the heroic example set last month by the women of Bryant's Station, who all, old and young, marched calmly and in single file down to a spring, the path to which they knew to be ambushed the whole way by a gang of cruel, bloodthirsty demons, and all for the sake of water to drink! And shall I hesitate, brother, when so much more is at stake? Come now; here's an apron for the powder. I'll be back in a jiffy."

Betty Zane had her way. A signal was made to the fort to have the south sally-port ready. The intrepid young girl stepped out of the unbarred door and bounded across the interval with the speed of a deer.

The Indians, who were stationed behind trees, stumps, cabins, etc., warily watching the gates and portholes for a chance shot, were amazed and paralyzed at the apparition, only exclaiming, contemptuously, "squaw! squaw!"

Before they could recover from their daze Betty had reached the gate. It opened to receive her, and she was for the present beyond all harm. The wearied little garrison were inspirited by this heroic self-sacrifice, and crowded about the beautiful girl with admiring comments. Her apron was speedily filled with powder, and she was now ready for the return.

This was infinitely more perilous than the first venture. Her safety then might have been due to surprise, to absence of suspicion, to some sudden freak of savage chivalry, but would these causes operate now, when the ladened apron proclaimed the object of her hardy enterprise?

The gate is again softly opened. Not a redskin is in sight. Out once more darts the fearless and unflinching girl, bearing, as it were, about her person the lives of a whole household.

Ah, but this time she goes not unchallenged. Her errand is at once revealed to many wary, gleaming eyes. A volley of rifle balls from the lurking foe greets her presence. A number of fierce and cruel savages leap out from cover, and with frightful yells and upraised tomahawks, rush forward in pursuit. One, more swift and reckless than the rest, pauses for an instant to cast at her his fatal weapon.

But she who has dared so much for others is not herself left defenceless at this appalling crisis of her life. A hurtling volley of bullets rains forth from both fort and Zane's house. The audacious savage, riddled with unerring balls, drops in his very tracks; the tomahawk falls harmless from his nerveless hand; the rest of the gang retire baffled and discomfited, and Betty, breathless but unscathed, springs into the arms of her anxious brother.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Health is Capital.

Who can doubt it? Do we not every day see the vigorous and clear-headed pushing on to fortune, and the feeble and brain-deranged tarrying by the way? Health gives energy, vim. What a healthy mind conceives, a healthy body is prompt to execute. Difficulties which deter the invalid altogether, the vigorous man surmounts at a bound. If we would be successful, let us first be healthy. The initial step to be taken toward arriving at that condition is to rally the failing energies of the system. As a renovant of decaying vital power, Hostetter's Stomach Bitters may be justly recommended in preference to all other tonics, since its superiority as an invigorant is the subject of daily demonstration. But it is far more than a simple recuperant of physical strength; it is a prompt remedy for bodily irregularities, particularly of the stomach, bowels and liver, and a reliable preventive of maladies begotten of miasma, impure water, exposure and exhaustion, the bad effects of which it invariably counteracts.

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One of the most important female qualities is sweetness of temper. Heaven did not give to women insinuation and persuasion in order to be surly; it did not make them weak in order to be imperious; it did not give them a sweet voice to be employed in scolding.

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Fratier's Root Bitters lays the axe at the root of the tree of all diseases by purifying the blood, and pure blood will cure consumption just as certain as it will remove pimples from the skin, and those who wish to have their system invigorated with rich, pure, strong blood, must use the Root Bitters.

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Constipation, indigestion and failure to perspire freely causes palpitation of the heart, throbbing of the stomach, shortness of the breath, swimming or dizziness of the head, numbness of the body, stagnation of the blood, and many other distressing symptoms; the Root Bitters cures all such difficulties. It stimulates the circulation, and removes all obstructions. Skin Diseases, Pimples, Blotches, Saltrheum (Tetter), Erysipelas, Scurvy, White Swelling, Ringworm, Cancerous Formations, Tumors, Ulcers, and every other variety of disease, cannot exist on pure blood. Rid blood makes these diseases; cleanse the blood, and the disease will disappear.

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Mrs. Daniel Smith, of Concord, N. H., afflicted with weakness, pain in lungs and shoulder, heavy pain over the eyes, restless at night and tired, faintly feelings all the time, writes:

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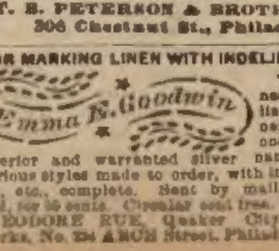
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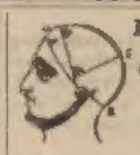
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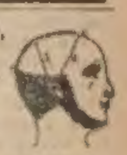
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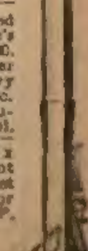
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The Boudoir

NOTES & QUERIES.

[Communications relating exclusively to subjects considered in this department, in order to receive prompt attention, should be addressed to "Fashion Editress" SATURDAY EVENING POST.]

We cannot offer any special novelty to our fair readers this week, either in shape or material; but there are always minor changes to describe concerning the details of costumes and small items to chronicle, and so there never can be an utter stagnation of news in the fashionable world, or world of fashion, to be more wise in one's choice of terms, no matter how dull everything outside may be.

One sees so many charming summer fabrics in market nowadays, and there is such generous scope allowed individual fancy in the making up of such goods, that the wonder is how to choose in the midst of so much that is artistic and beautiful.

We notice with pleasure the increasing popularity of the silk tissues, which some years ago were so much in vogue, but which had been allowed to be "laid upon a very high and forgotten shelf" for several seasons.

One of a sort of diagonal stripe, the stripes being an inch wide and thicker than the foundation fabric, was of a lovely salmon tint, with golden lights in it, and would be just the most charming evening or dinner dress for a brunette imaginable.

Another was shown us in clear rose color. This was plaided with narrow satin stripes, a shade deeper. It was designed for evening wear, and was in an overskirt and sleeveless basque, to be worn over black silk underskirt. The overskirt was long and ample. Apron front, trimmed with three rows of knife blade pleating, put on to simulate three aprons. The back was looped by a wide sash of rose colored faille, gracefully draped, and tied below the bouffants in a large bow with long ends.

We have described so many of the overdresses and basques of the Hamburg cloth, and the fabric called Mexicaine, that it would be but reiteration for us to do more than allude to their continued popularity.

We saw in our last promenade some charming suits in batiste and undressed linen, also many tasteful wrappers in lawn with a lace pattern stripe for trimming the front, pockets, sleeves, etc.

A suit of the new plaid gingham, combined with undressed gray linen, was very striking, and when worn by a pretty, stylish-looking person, would no doubt look well—a little risky for ordinary people, however.

The underskirt of the gray linen had a deep flounce, trimmed both top and bottom with a bias of the plaid gingham. The overskirt and sleeveless basque were of the plaid. The overskirt a deep, slightly shirred apron, edged with a fine pleating of the gray linen. The basque was of the French shape, shorter in the back than on the hips and in front. The sleeves were of the linen very slightly shirred and with deep pointed cuffs of the plaid gingham. A round standing collar, with broken points in front, of the plaid lined with the linen, finished the neck, while shirred pockets of the linen were placed on each side of the front of the overskirt. A gray English straw hat, trimmed with a soft scarf of plaid Louisiana, was worn with this suit.

A charming model for striped or plaid black hernani, combined with the plain, was made as follows: Underskirt of the plaid trimmed with pleated flounces of the striped or plaid, two in the front and side widths and four on the back breadths. The overdress, a deep pointed apron, was of the striped fabric, trimmed with three rows of cut tape fringe intermingled with a mossy crimped silk fringe. These rows were set on at intervals to simulate three overlapping aprons, which is a very popular style now. The basque was of the striped and made in what is known as the side pleated waist. The pleats all lie in one direction on each side and are an inch and a half in width. The effect is good when the pleats are neatly made and lie flat. A high side pleated fraise completed the neck and was brought down bretelle fashion on each side of the front. Bows of faille ribbons instead of buttons closed the front and were placed at the wrists.

A dress of rich black faille, intended for reception or dinner wear, was made as follows. It is said to have been one of Worth's designs: There was no overskirt, and the one long skirt was made with an ample train finished with a deep flounce, headed by two narrow knife pleatings. This trimming was confined to the back and side breadths. The front was trimmed with folds of the silk lapped diagonally from left to right. These folds were in clusters of about twelve inches in width, each fold being two inches wide; there were only two of these clusters. Between them were flounces of bouiton lace, white, following the direction of the folds, and put on almost without any perceptible fulness. Bows of gros grain ribbons, with loops, and ends marked the joining of the front and side breadths. The sleeves and almost the entire waist were of the lace—a sort of peasant waist of the silk being made—differing in shape from the ordinary style of peasant waist, inasmuch as this was open at the belt, back and front, and merely described bretelles over the shoulders. The skirt of this basque was of the silk, however, round, short, in the cuirass shape, with a sort of jabot of lace intermingled with loops of ribbon just at the back. Nothing more elegant or *distingue* than this toilette can be well imagined.

A morning dress of pale blue organdy lawn was made in this wise: The shape a Gabrielle, with ample fulness let in at the back under the side pleats. A wide frill of the sheerest Swiss muslin, embroidered on the edge and about five inches in width, was the trimming, commencing at the throat, extending down the front and from thence around the bottom of the skirt, put on in a shell or waving pattern. Loops of pale pink and blue ribbons were placed down the front and intermingled with the muslin trimming around the entire skirt. A Swiss muslin frill at the throat and two upon the half loose sleeves completed this charming *negligee*.

ODDS AND ENDS.

Among the novelties for children of both sexes are large gray linen sailor collars, edged with guipure lace of the same shade.

Ties of ecru lace worn above the collar, with suits of black hernani, are considered very stylish.

The latest trimming for the wide rimmed Leghorn flats, is a scarf of white grenadine, folded about the crown, and with or without ends at the back.

Pongees are very fashionable for suits.

Overdresses with sleeveless basques of ecru insertion, alternated with black ribbon, an inch and a half or two inches wide, are very much worn, and have a stylish appearance.

The glove of undressed kid, known as the *gant de Suede*, is *par excellence* the preference for summer wear traveling, etc. They were shown in ecru and drab, and for mourning, black and pearl color.

Black satin fans, tipped with fine Marabout feather trimming, and without any ornamentation or pointing, are the newest.

Sun umbrellas have in many cases a deep fringe of silk, matching the suit of the article.

The pretty aumoniere pockets, so fashionable last summer, have given place to pockets on the basque and overskirts.

ANSWERS TO OUR CORRESPONDENTS.

LILY J.—Your garnet sett of jewelry will be very stylish worn with your pearl-colored evening silk; wear pearl gray gloves.

LOTTA K.—The price of the lead comb is $1.25; you can no longer procure them for less. Sorry we cannot send the samples desired; the merchants positively refuse to give them to us.

MISS ELEANOR K.—Make a sleeveless basque of guipure insertion and black ribbon velvet. The ecru will be best. It will be very stylish worn with your grenadine suit. Get a white chip hat, trimmed with loops, or a scarf of pale blue, with the most delicate tinted blush roses outside and in front.

MRS. M. J. N.—Your sample of goods was a fine pongee. It will look well worn over a brown silk underskirt, and trimmed with fine knife pleatings of brown silk. Make a sleeveless basque, and have puffed or shirred sleeves of brown silk to match your underskirt. Your black chip trimmed with cream-colored loops and scarlet poppies will look very nicely with such a suit.

NINON.

ANCHOR WATCH YARNS.

"FOR LIFE OR DEATH."

THE SEA CAPTAIN'S STORY.

BY LIEUT H. D. SMITH, U. S. R. M.

The United States revenue cutter, Dolphin, was lying snugly at anchor in the well protected harbor of one of the numerous ports on her station, and the anchor watch-light swung merrily to and fro above the heads of the men who composed the watch. Both officers and crew felt satisfied with their day's work, for, through their exertions that day an entire ship's company had been saved from the breakers and the jaws of death, while a noble ship and a valuable cargo had been snatched from destruction. The master of the ship, a fine-looking specimen of an American sailor, had come on board to further express his thanks for the service rendered.

"My wife and little ones owe to you more than I can express," he said; "but for God's help and your providential assistance, I should have now been an inmate of Davy Jones' locker. But for you my wife would have been a widow, and my owners the losers of as fine a ship as ever floated on salt water. This has been an eventful voyage for me, gentlemen, and previous to leaving the Hooghly I narrowly escaped with my life."

"It is early, captain, but too late to transact any business ashore this evening," replied the commanding officer of the Dolphin, who was ever keenly on the alert for an opportunity to hear a good yarn spun. "Will you accept a stateroom from me, spend the night with us, and—spin the yarn about the Hooghly—which you just referred to?"

"With pleasure, sir; but I am afraid after you hear it, you may attribute to me a tinge of superstition, a love for the marvellous, and a touch of the supernatural; but, gentlemen, I can refer you to my wife, God bless her, who will substantiate all I—John Havard—have to say. Gentlemen, do you believe in dreams? do you think when the body is lulled to rest that the soul wanders where it listeth? that we are nearer to the other world, and are allowed a nearer insight into the mysteries of what is to come? Ah, you smile—well, I do not wonder at it. I never believed until this last voyage that there was anything tangible to a dream. But to my yarn. I was lying in the Hooghly preparatory to going to sea, having dropped down from Calcutta, and while there was run into one dark night by a tow-boat, through carelessness. Neither of us sustained any great damage, still I was obliged to go to the city for assistance, as the injury was beyond the powers of my carpenter. I took passage in the tug, which laid by me all night, telling my wife to look out for me that evening, as I should return in a shore boat, and in a few moments I was steaming up the muddy waters of the ancient river.

Transacting my business, and effecting arrangements for the repairs to be done as soon as possible, I hastened to the ghaut, engaged a boat, and with a feeling of relief beheld her headed down stream. The seats were luxuriously furnished, arranged with an especial eye to comfort, while the boatmen, six in number, were remarkable for their huge frames and neat attire. They wore the whitest of turbans, the most spotless of cummerbunds, and their manners were suave and pleasant. Stretching myself at full length on the cushions, I lit a cigar and gave myself up to delicious thought.

The oars dipped with a long, regular stroke, the crew keeping up a low, musical accompaniment that insensibly produced a drowsy feeling, against which I did not attempt to struggle.

The monotony of the scenery, together with the low, musical chant of the boatmen, lulled me to rest, and I slumbered. Now, gentlemen, comes the strange, unaccountable portion of my story, viz: my wife's dream.

In the early part of the evening my wife retired to her stateroom suffering severely from a headache, while every nerve in her body thrilled with a terrible energy. Tossing from side to side, she at last fell into an uneasy slumber, her last thoughts centered upon me.

Suddenly the entire after portion of the cabin seemed to be rent asunder, enabling her to look out upon the muddy waters of the river. As if endowed with wings she floated through the calm, tropical air, until she hovered over a boat pulling down river manned by six natives. In the stern sheets reclined the form of one, who, as she bent over him, proved to be her husband. One other figure in the stern of the boat attracted her attention, it was that of a native, a huge, stalwart fellow, who was steering the boat.

The gold watch and chain I wore appeared to have attracted the fellow's attention, as, with cautious movements, he bent over me, his dark, scowling face dimly relieved by the starlight to my wife. With one finger pressed on his lips in token of silence, he made certain signs to the observant crew, whose dark, glowing eyes were fastened intently upon my unconscious form. As the designs of the crew became apparent to my wife, she could feel her heart beating violently, and when she saw the tall steersman rise from his place with a line dangling from his hand, she recognized at once his true character. They were *water Thugs*.

Cautiously, silently, with the stealthy tread of a cat, the swarthy native crept nearer to his intended victim, and with a half suppressed scream my wife awoke, bathed in perspiration.

Now, gentlemen, we will see if that dream had any connection with my night's adventure. If you remember, I was lying in the stern sheets of the boat, had fallen asleep, never dreaming of danger, far less suspecting that I was surrounded by the keen-eyed followers of Bowhanie.

A sudden movement, a violent careening of the boat, caused me to start in alarm to my feet, gaze about me, and in an instant I realized what was going on, as well as the danger I was in.

One of the Thugs, in crawling aft to assist his chief adjust the fatal roomal about my throat, stumbled over a thwart, falling heavily across the gunwale of the boat. It was that which had awakened me, and to that accident I owed my life.

In an instant I was on my feet, and, snatching an oar, essayed to use it on the souls of the treacherous miscreants, but the agile, athletic scoundrels were too quick for me. They had been well educated and trained to their work.

With a wild cry I found myself battling with them, alone and unaided, with the remorseless crew, whose cruel black eyes seemed to emit sparks of fire as they glared into mine. They had divested themselves of the greater portion of their clothing, and their bodies, which had been oiled, slipped through my grasp. In vain I tried to use the oar as a weapon of defence. It was too unwieldy. I beheld death staring me in the face, the dark waters of the Hooghly were destined to be my grave, and in my desperation I shouted aloud for succor.

Twice the Thugs succeeded in throwing the roomal over my head, but with almost superhuman efforts I threw it off, and, bursting from their grasp, threw myself headlong into the river.

Diving deep below the surface, I swam with the current, heading in for the bank of the river, in hopes to escape the land-sharks on my track.

I was forced to come to the surface for air, and before I could clear my eyes from the water, they were upon me again. I felt the hot breath of the thugs on my cheek as I was dragged on board, and with a last effort I again screamed for help. The river was luminous with phosphorescent light, which accounted for the ease and precision with which the thugs had followed my trail.

The wind in fitful gusts swept down the river, as if moaning forth my last requiem.

I struggled to the last with the slippery, agile natives who held me down with a grasp of iron. I felt the awful, cutting roomal coiled about my neck like the slimy fold of a serpent. My brain was on fire; myriads of lights danced before my half-closed eyes; my heart almost ceased beating as the tough silken cord cut deep into my flesh. A half-uttered prayer for mercy, a supplication for my wife and little ones died away in my throat, as all hope deserted me. I felt myself sinking; shadowy forms hovered about me, and strange whispers gurgled in my ears; then came a blank; a dark cloud appeared to settle around me, and all was oblivion.

For the second time on that eventful night did my wife dream. Again did she see the cabin open; once more she appeared to hover over the mighty river, now half obscured by a thin, misty haze. Again did she see the boat with the six native oarsmen, but the form of her husband was no longer reclining in the stern sheets of the boat. A strange commotion was going on. A man was struggling for his life; and she saw my pale face, streaming with blood, gazing upon her with an imploring, earnest expression.

She awoke with all the details of that horrible dream still vividly in her brain. Arousing the mate, she bade him man the ship's boat, to arm himself, and proceed at once in search of me.

"My husband is in peril, deadly peril, and you must hasten to the rescue," she moaned.

The sight of her wan face and falling tears was sufficient for the mate, who needed no other incentive to hasten to my rescue, though wondering, however, where my wife could have received the news.

Jumping into a boat, the mate ordered the men to give way, which they did with a will. With the speed of a race-horse the light boat swept up the river, as the brawny fellows bent to the tough ashen blades.

The night was calm and still; the slightest noise could be heard on the surface of the river a great distance. Amid the splash of their oars and the whirl of the bubbles round the bow, all hands suddenly heard a shrill cry of distress. They listened for a moment. The mate muttered:

"There is foul play going on somewhere, and I do believe the 'old man' has been caught foul."

With a simultaneous splash the oars struck the water, and the boat shot ahead with renewed speed, nearly running down the native boat containing the Thugs, who were too intent upon making away with their victim to notice what was transpiring about them.

As the boat brushed alongside the men trailed their oars, while the mate, revolver in hand, leaped over the low gunwale of the native boat. The sharp, ringing reports followed, and the tables were turned, but none too soon for me.

Well, gentlemen, to cut my yarn short, I was saved, while the six shots of the mate's revolver wound up the career of the same number of Thugs. Their boat was suffered to drift on into the darkness with the tide, and I, when I returned to consciousness, found myself in the arms of her I loved best on earth, who related to me the denouement of the affair.

Gentlemen, you can speculate upon theory as much as you like, smile at the idea of their being anything to a dreamer, but, as for me—well, you must judge for yourselves as to my opinion. Gentlemen, I have done."

THE ILLUSTRATED LANGUAGE OF FLOWERS.

The single flower depicted in our illustration is intended to convey the most unqualified praise.

"Thou art all that is lovely!" What sentence could be more flattering? It comprehends all that a poet could say in twenty stanzas or a hundred sonnets.

This highly significant flower—Austrian Rose—was introduced into gardens in the reign of Charles I. It is a native of Germany. In color it is bright red, large in size, and spreading in form; it blooms during June and July.

There is also the Austrian Briar-Rose, a spring flower, some species of which are red, and others yellow.

When once we enter into the subject of roses, we find ourselves in a world of bewildering fertility and unbounded extent.

The rose is a universal flower. It is found everywhere. It grows in the cold deserts of Siberia, and in the tropical regions of India and Africa.

A hundred known species, and two thousand varieties are cultivated in American gardens alone.

Its poetical value has been priceless. From the earliest ages it has been the chosen theme of the minstrel's song.

They have called it the daughter of Heaven, the ornament of earth, the glory of spring, have acknowledged it as the emblem of love, youth and beauty, the queen of flowers, the favorite of the world.

In Berkeley's "Utopia," an imaginary land of happiness and perfection, lovers are described as declaring their affection by means of a rosebud just *opening;* if this was accepted, a *half-blown* rose was the next gift, and if this, too, was favorably received, the lover expressed the culmination of his affection by a *full-blown* rose, and the lady was considered engaged for life.

This brings us back to our more immediate subject, the practical application of the floral language in amatory matters.

We have said that there is no grammar in the language of flowers; but there are certain modifications in the meanings, which can be easily produced.

Thus a flower being reversed, its meaning is reversed also, and becomes the exact opposite of what was previously understood.

Thorns signify fears; a rose from which the thorns have been removed means "I fear no more," or, "There is no longer cause for fear;" and in the same way, as leaves signify hopes, that which remains of the flower after both the thorns and the leaves are removed, denote that the person concerned neither hopes nor fears.

Bending the flower to the right when you present it, expresses the pronoun "I," and inclining it to the left expresses "thou." Putting the flower to the lips means "yes;" plucking off one of the small petals and throwing it aside is "no." "I wish," or "I desire," is expressed by placing a sprig of parsley in the bouquet. We may add that each flower is further modified in meaning according to where it is placed. Thus the marigold of itself signifies pain; placed on the head it shows that the sort of pain is mental distress; near the heart it expresses the pangs of love, but if placed at the bosom, indifference or aversion.

Poetry avails itself of the rose in every imaginable way; it lavishes it in gardens, waves it into chaplets, turns it into arbors, forges it into chains, and makes its every part an object of comparison with some perfection of female beauty.

"A bed of lillies flower upon her cheek,
And in the midst was set a circling rose."
FLETCHER.

Of old the rose was consecrated to Venus. It formed the chaplet of Cupid, "the Rosy God," and encircled the goblet of Bacchus.

No festive occasion, no solemn sacrifice was complete without roses.

Anacreon, the poet of love, is most lavish with these sweet productions; all his odes breathe of the rose, and many of them are entirely devoted to the rose's beauty.

"While we invoke the wreathed spring,
Resplendent Rose, to thee we'll sing.
Resplendent Rose, the flower of flowers,
Whose breath perfumes Olympia's bowers,
Whose virgin blush of chasten'd dye,
Enchants so much our mortal eye."
MORE'S TRANSLATION.

Ancient fable attributes the red color of the rose to an accident which befel Venus, who, when hastening to the relief of her beloved Adonis, chanced to wound her delicate foot with a thorn. It drew blood—

"Which on the white rose being shed,
Made it forever after red."
HERRICK.

Other poetical writers have their favorite stories to account for the different colors of the rose, which they assume to have been white originally.

CORRESPONDENTS' BUREAU.

☞ All communications should be addressed to WALKER, REED & Co., Proprietors SATURDAY EVENING POST, No. 726 SANSOM Street, Philadelphia.

☞ This Department will be found an attractive feature to all our readers. In addition to important and particular information for Subscribers, Contributors, and others, it will contain many novel, instructive and entertaining topics, fully discussed in answer to the numerous Notes and Queries contained in our general correspondence.

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Authors and others will take notice that, by rules of the P. O. Department, Manuscripts intended for publication in periodicals are subject to letter rates. Rejected MSS. will not be returned, unless by special request, with sufficient stamps enclosed to prepay postage.

DECLINED WITH THANKS.—Lost on the Prairie. Our Fishing Party. Nellie's Secret. Tempted. Consequences of a Mistake. I'm Coming, Love, to Thee. The Old Song. Woman's Faith.

W. S. F. (Slippery Rock, Pa.)—We regret that the MS. did not suit us, and also that we cannot point out the deficiencies in it. We never criticise any of the MSS. sent to us for publication.

LITERATEUR.—We are afraid you have a very exaggerated idea of your own literary abilities, and a very erroneous one of the qualities required to make a successful newspaper editor. You say "it is an easy thing, I should think, to write editorials for a newspaper." Is it, indeed? Let any person who thinks with you that it is an easy thing to write a newspaper article try it. But one article would be no test of success. An editor must be able, like the celebrated French cook, to prepare twelve courses of fish, flesh and fowl, from one square lump of veal. He must be ever sparkling and fresh; never flagging nor dull for a moment. He must mingle the grave with the gay, the lively with the severe, fact with comment. He must have a versatile taste, a well stored memory, a light and playful imagination, a logical mind, and an unswerving judgment.

CORRESPONDENTS' NOTES AND QUERIES.

JERSY.—Discolored ivory may be whitened by rubbing it with a paste composed of burnt pumice stone and water. Afterwards place the ivory under a glass case in the sun.

MINER.—"Can you tell me the origin of the name "cannel coal?" The term, we believe, is a Lancashire brogue for candle, pronounced "can'l" by the miners, because it ignites and burns like a candle.

A BUTCHER.—We know of no "wash of any kind" that you could apply to fresh meat to keep away flies. We never heard of such a thing, and cannot suppose that such a process would improve either the taste or color of the meat.

H. W.—To remove ink, paint, or grease spots from clothing, carpets, etc., mix well in a bottle four tablespoonfuls of spirits of turpentine, the same quantity of alcohol, and one tablespoonful of table salt. When thoroughly mixed, apply with a sponge or stiff brush. This is effectual. Dip linen which has been stained in ink, first in a strong solution of salt and water, and then wash out in lemon juice.

EMERALD ISLE—There are two Emmets connected with rebellions in Ireland. Robert Emmet was born at Cork, in 1780, and in 1803 was ringleader in the troubles in which Lord Killwarden and others were killed. Emmet was arrested, tried and executed. Thomas A. Emmet was also born at Cork, and was mixed up with the rising in 1795, for which he was tried and imprisoned. He afterwards went to New York, where he died in 1827.

STRAIGHT HAIR.—If your hair is very straight and very obstinate, we are afraid that nothing will help it to curl; but try as a last resource the following preparation: Take borax, two ounces; gum arabic, one drachm; add hot water (not boiling), one quart; stir, and as soon as the ingredients are dissolved, add three tablespoonfuls of strong spirits of camphor. On retiring to rest, wet the hair with the above liquid, and roll it in twists of paper, as usual.

T. W. H. (Philadelphia).—"What is the proper pronounciation of the words "desert" and "dessert," and what is the true meaning of each?" A "desert" means, of course, a wilderness, an uninhabited tract of country, and a "dessert" is a course of fruits, confectionery, etc., served after the more substantial parts of a dinner have been removed. It is in the pronunciation of these two words, however, that we are aware so many persons err. In the word "desert," the accent is on the first syllable, and it is pronounced as "dez-ert." The word "dessert" has the accent on the last syllable, and is pronounced "dez-zert."

CHARON.—"Do you know the origin of the popular saying, 'Gone where the woodbine twineth.' I have asked several persons, and none of them are able to tell me." The saying was first used by the late James Fisk, of New York celebrity, when he was being examined by the committee on Bankings and Currency. He was asked by one of the members of the committee where a certain sum of money had gone to, and not liking, he says himself, to use the vulgar expression "up the spout," he remembered to have seen, while peddling through New England, that every spout of a house or cottage had a woodbine twining around it, and so he substituted, on the spur of the moment, "where the woodbine twineth."

K. A. B. (Camden).—"Please give me some hints about keeping gold fish, as I have been very unlucky with mine, and how long can they be kept?" Gold fish may be kept ten or twelve years (the average period of existence) by using the following precautions: Allow not more than one fish to two quarts of water. Use the same kind of water, whether well or river; change it every other day in summer, and twice each week in winter. Keep clean sand and pebbles at the bottom, washing it occasionally or replacing it with a fresh supply. Use a small net rather than the hand while changing the water. Feed with cracker, yolk of egg, lettuce or flies, once each week, except in cold weather; remove any crumbs that may remain on the surface after feeding. Do not feed at all from November to the end of February, and but little during the following three months. If there are growing plants in the aquarium, water need be changed but rarely. Keep from sun and in coolest part of room.

E. M. I. (Philadelphia).—Temperance is as necessary in the use of temperate as of strong beverages. Chinese writers tell us that tea is of a cooling nature. If indulged in too freely, it will produce exhaustion and lassitude. If too strong, it acts on the nerves injuriously; also the kidneys. The Chinese themselves rarely consume any other than black tea. The Russians seldom use any but green. They are partial to a squeeze of lemon in their tea instead of milk or sugar. By some the use of tea is condemned in unqualified terms; by others it has ascribed to it extraordinary virtues. The middle course will perhaps be the most just. Tea, in general, does more harm from the quantity of unnecessary liquid which it introduces into the stomach than by its specific qualities. Unnecessary liquid weakens the stomach. Green tea is more apt to affect the nerves of the stomach than black tea, especially when drunk without milk or without eating something. Tea drunk at a late hour in large quantities is apt to provoke wakefulness.

W. C. K. (Germantown).—There are so many ways of drying plants that almost every botanist has a plan of his own. The only points to attend to, are to dry specimens quickly, thoroughly and beneath a pressure that will not crush them. If they are succulent, or apt to cast their leaves, they should be dipped in boiling water previously to being placed under pressure. A good method is to place each specimen within a sheet of brown paper, and to interpose several empty sheets between each that is filled; then to place them in a napkin press, and to press them gently for the first day or two, just enough to prevent the leaves and flowers from shriveling. When the papers are quite damp, separate them, spread them on the floor of a room where they can become a little dry, and then gather them together, and place them in the press as before, rather increasing the pressure. This operation is repeated daily till the plants are quite dry. A quicker and better, but more troublesome way, is to shift the plants daily out of their damp papers into hot and dry ones, immediately pressing them down.

F. F. J. (Maine).—"What is the casing of the Atlantic cable wires made of? I know they are encased in something, but I don't know what it is." The cable is encased in several coatings. The centre is composed of a steel wire, around which several copper wires are wound spirally. These form the conductor, copper being the best conducting metal for electricity. These are coated with gutta percha, in three layers. Outside of this again is a coating of manilla yarn, wound spirally in one direction, and a second coating wound in the other direction. This gutta percha, from its nonconducting properties, insulates the electricity in the wire, and the manilla yarn protects the gutta percha.

GENTLEMAN DICK.—"I should be much obliged if you can tell me what have been the professions of all the past Presidents of the United States, if it is not too much trouble for you to find out." It, of course, is some trouble to find out such a piece of information, but the trouble we are always glad to undertake for our readers. The following is the result of our research: Washington, soldier; Adams, lawyer; Jefferson, lawyer; Madison, lawyer and statesman; Monroe, lawyer; John Quincy Adams, lawyer; Jackson, lawyer and soldier; Van Buren, lawyer; Harrison, soldier; Tyler, lawyer; Polk, lawyer; Taylor, soldier; Fillmore, lawyer; Pierce, soldier and lawyer; Buchanan, lawyer; Lincoln, lawyer; Johnson, lawyer; Grant, soldier.

BERTIE.—Velocipedes are used a great deal in England, and are more finished and of more elaborate construction than any we have seen in this country. They are of various kinds, some have two, and others three, and even four wheels; all have either pedals or reels on which to place the feet, and, usually, either brakes or levers to regulate the speed. The two-wheel velocipedes—the bycicles, as they are styled—are intended for the male sex only, and are by far the swiftest machines. They are usually of wrought iron, and have pedals, or reels, attached to the front and larger wheel, and the working of which, by a light movement of the feet, gives the requisite impulsion to the vehicle. The saddle is poised on a bar of iron, suspended a few inches above the top of the fore wheel. The hands rest on a handle in front of the machine, which, working on a pivot, serves as a balancing pole, the equilibrium being preserved by giving a slight twist to this handle. The brake, which at once stops the revolving motion of the wheel, is applied by means of a sharper twist.

E. L. B. (Camden).—"Please describe to me the process of gilding the edges of books." The gold applied to the edges of books, etc., is in the same state as for various ornamental purposes—namely, an extremely thin leaf. Before the case or cover of the book is quite finished, the volume is struck forcibly against the back so as to make the fore-edge flat instead of concave. It is then placed in a press, with the exposed edge uppermost. The edge is scraped smooth with a piece of steel, and is coated with a mixture of red chalk and water. The gold is blown out from small books, and spread on a leather cushion, where it is cut to the proper size by a smooth-edged knife. A camel hair pencil is dipped into white of egg mixed with water, and with this the partially dry edge of the book is moistened; the gold is then taken up on a flat kind of brush, and applied to the moistened edge, to which it instantly adheres. When all the three edges have been gilt in this way, and allowed to remain a very few minutes, the workman takes a burnisher formed of a very smooth piece of hard stone (usually bloodstone), and setting the end of the handle against his shoulder, rubs the gold very forcibly, which gives the gold a high degree of polish.

YOUNG SUBSCRIBER.—"What kind of books should I read to improve my mind, and how shall I know if books are suitable and proper for me to read?" We are glad you have asked us this question, and hope that having asked it, you mean to follow our advice. We know that it is a hard matter to young people to believe what older people say about the the selection of reading matter. If a book is interesting, exciting, and thrilling, they want to read it. They like to feel their hair stand on end at the hairbreadth escapes of the hero, and their nerves tingle to the ends of their fingers at his exploits, and their faces burn with passionate sympathy in his tribulations, and they cannot see what harm there is in such reading. If they read nothing else but such kind of books, then just as children fed on candies and cakes soon lose all healthy appetite for wholesome food, in like manner they, too, would soon lose all taste for intellectual and instructive books, and the mind would become not debilitated by such reading, but poisoned by unhealthy associations. Every book that one reads, no less than every dinner that one eats, becomes part and parcel of the individual, and we can no more read without injury an unwholesome book or periodical than we can eat tainted meat and not suffer thereby. You should read such books as give valuable information, histories, travels, such standard writers of fiction as are approved by persons of sound and mature judgment. Never read any book that will make the ordinary duties of life distasteful, or render vice in any way attractive.

G. WEATHERLY.—"Will you please answer the two following questions, which you, I suppose, will have no difficulty in doing. 1. How far above the surface of the earth does the atmosphere extend. 2. How much is the pressure of the whole atmosphere upon the earth computed to be?" 1. It has been computed to extend about forty-five miles above the earth's surface, and it presses on the earth with a force proportioned to its height and density. From experiments made with the barometer, it has been ascertained that it presses with a weight of about fifteen pounds on every square inch of the earth's surface; and, therefore, its pressure on the body of a middle-sized man is equal to about thirty-two thousand pounds, or fourteen tons avoirdupois, a pressure which would be insupportable, and even fatal, were it not equal on every part, and counterbalanced by the spring of the air within us. 2. The pressure of the atmosphere on the earth is computed to be equivalent to that of a globe of lead sixty-six miles in diameter; in other words, the whole mass of the air, which surrounds the globe, compresses the earth with a force or power equal to that of five thousand millions of millions of tons. This amazing pressure is, however, essentially necessary for the preservation of the present constitution of our globe, and of the animated beings which dwell on its surface. It prevents the heat of the sun from converting water and all other fluids into vapor; and preserves the vessels of all organized beings in due tone and vigor. Were the atmospherical pressure entirely removed, the elastic fluids contained in the finer vessels of men and other animals would inevitably burst them, and life would become extinct; and most of the substances on the face of the earth, particularly liquids, would be dissipated into vapor.

G. R. W. (Cape May).—The principal groups of volcanoes are found in the Asiatic Islands, on the west coast of both North and South America, and in the South Sea Islands. In these regions may be found more than three-fourths of all known volcanic mountains both silent and active. In the Asiatic Islands the volcanic belt passes through the Andaman Islands, Sumatra, Java, and Timor, then it turns northward to Amboina, Gilolo, and the Philippines, and then extends by the Loochoo Islands to Japan, the Kurile Islands and Kamtschatka. The region of the Asiatic Islands includes above one hundred active volcanic vents. The names of some of the volcanoes in America are: Mount Elias, Mount Regnier and Saint Helen's on the northwest coast: Chimborazo in Peru, and Aconcagua, 23,000 feet; Maypu, 17,082 feet; Antuco, 9,542 feet; Osorno, 7,643 feet; and Corcovado, 7,709 feet, in Chili. In the South Sea Islands the active vents occur in the New Guinea group, New Hebrides, New Zealand, and in the Friendly Islands. The active volcanoes of Europe comprise Mount Etna (10,873 feet high) on the eastern shore of the Island of Sicily, the islands of Stromboli, Vulcano and Vulcanello in the Lipari group, and Mount Vesuvius, about 4,000 feet high, on the west coast of Italy, near the shore of the Gulf of Naples. The substances ejected during an ordinary volcanic eruption are ashes, lava (a sort of liquid stone heated, which becomes solid as it cools), solid stones and boiling water. The eruptions are also attended by smoke, flame, and noise resembling thunder. Some volcanoes pour forth dust, some mud, and some fish in addition to the substances enumerated above. We are not aware that there is any proof of submarine communication between Etna and Vesuvius, for submarine, to some extent, it must be if communication exists. It cannot be purely subterranean, as you put it, since one mountain is on the island and the other on the mainland. These two volcanoes are about three hundred miles apart as the crow flies. Mount Hecla, in the island of Iceland, is perhaps the other European active volcano (not in Italy) about which you inquire, although it is not usually classed with European volcanoes. Iceland is far to the northwest of the mainland of Europe.

MISCELLANEOUS.—A. M. (Ohio, Ill.)—The twentieth anniversary of a wedding is called the "China wedding." RYANER (Buffalo).—Bulfinch's "Age of Fable" is the best work on mythology that we know of. DICONNER.—Scientifically speaking, black and white, certainly, are not colors, but in common parlance, they are held to be colors. J. W. S. (New Jersey).—We never heard of such a word, so cannot pretend to give you the meaning of it. Thanks for the numerical charade. ENQUIRE.—We think it would be more prudent to be guided by the advice of a qualified and responsible medical practitioner rather than by that of a total stranger. NELL.—Cutting the hair frequently is the best way of preventing the points from splitting. G. N. M.—You could not pass the required examination. For the information you desire, apply to the member or Congress from your district.

☞ *A number of communications have been received, which will be answered next week.*